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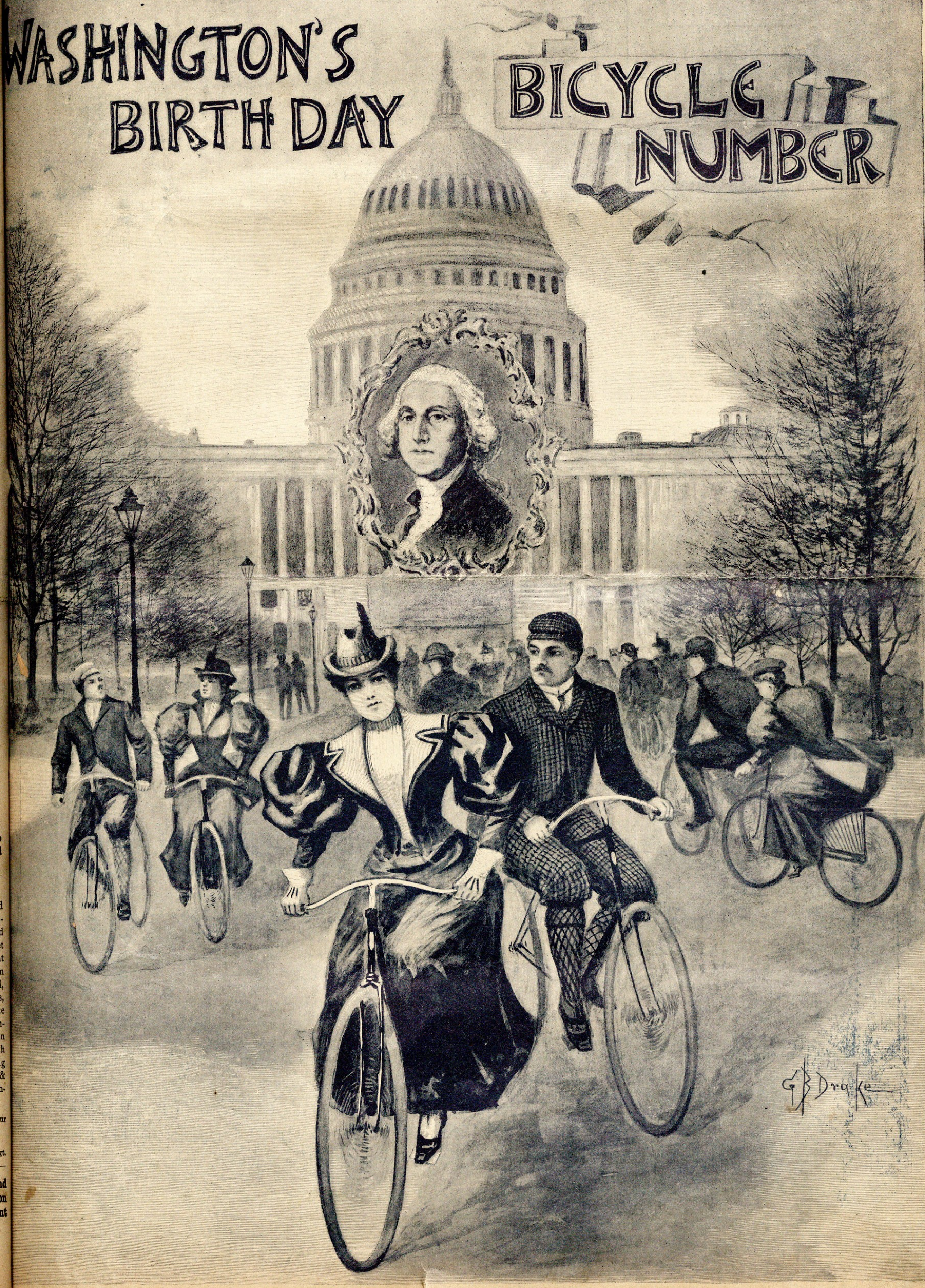
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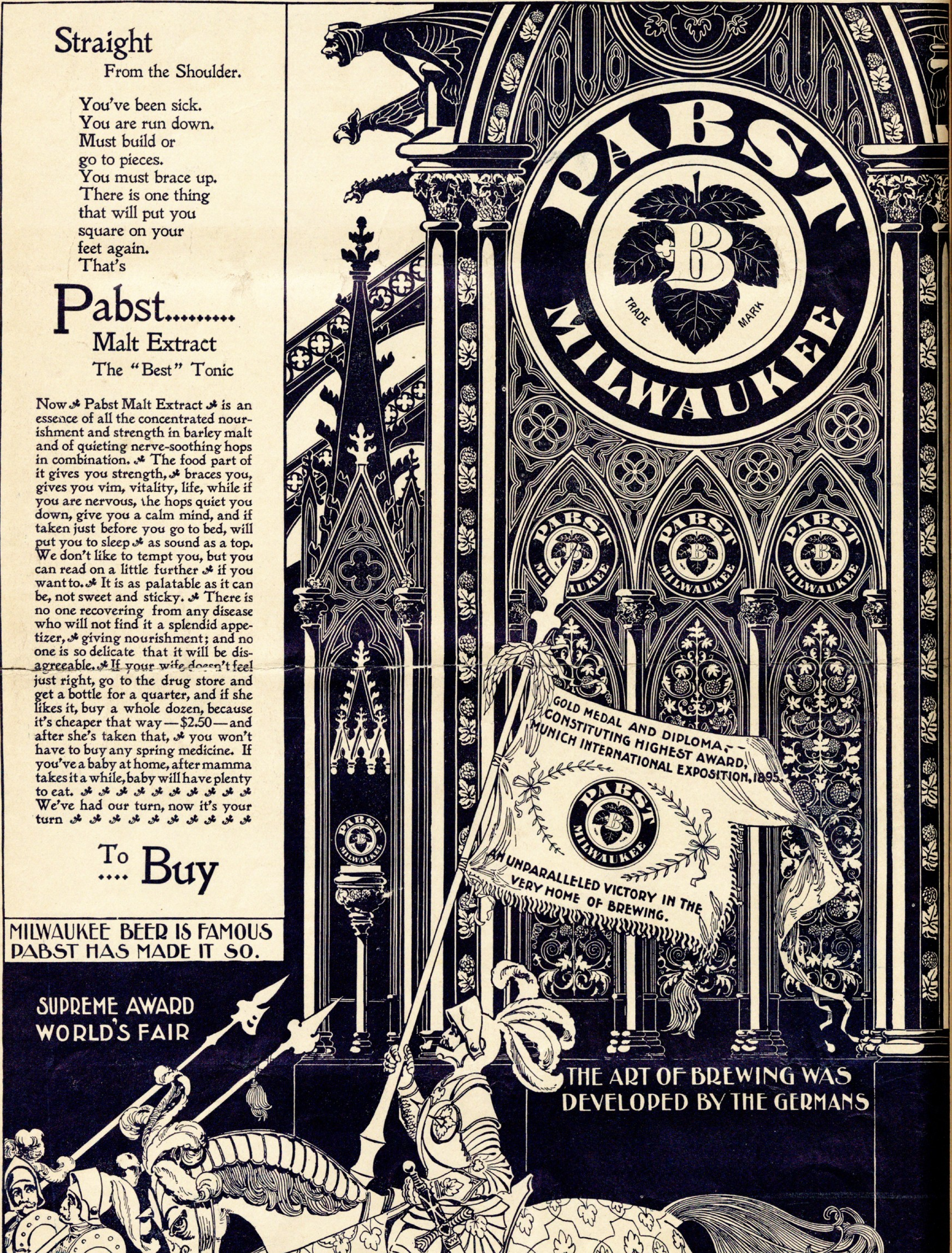
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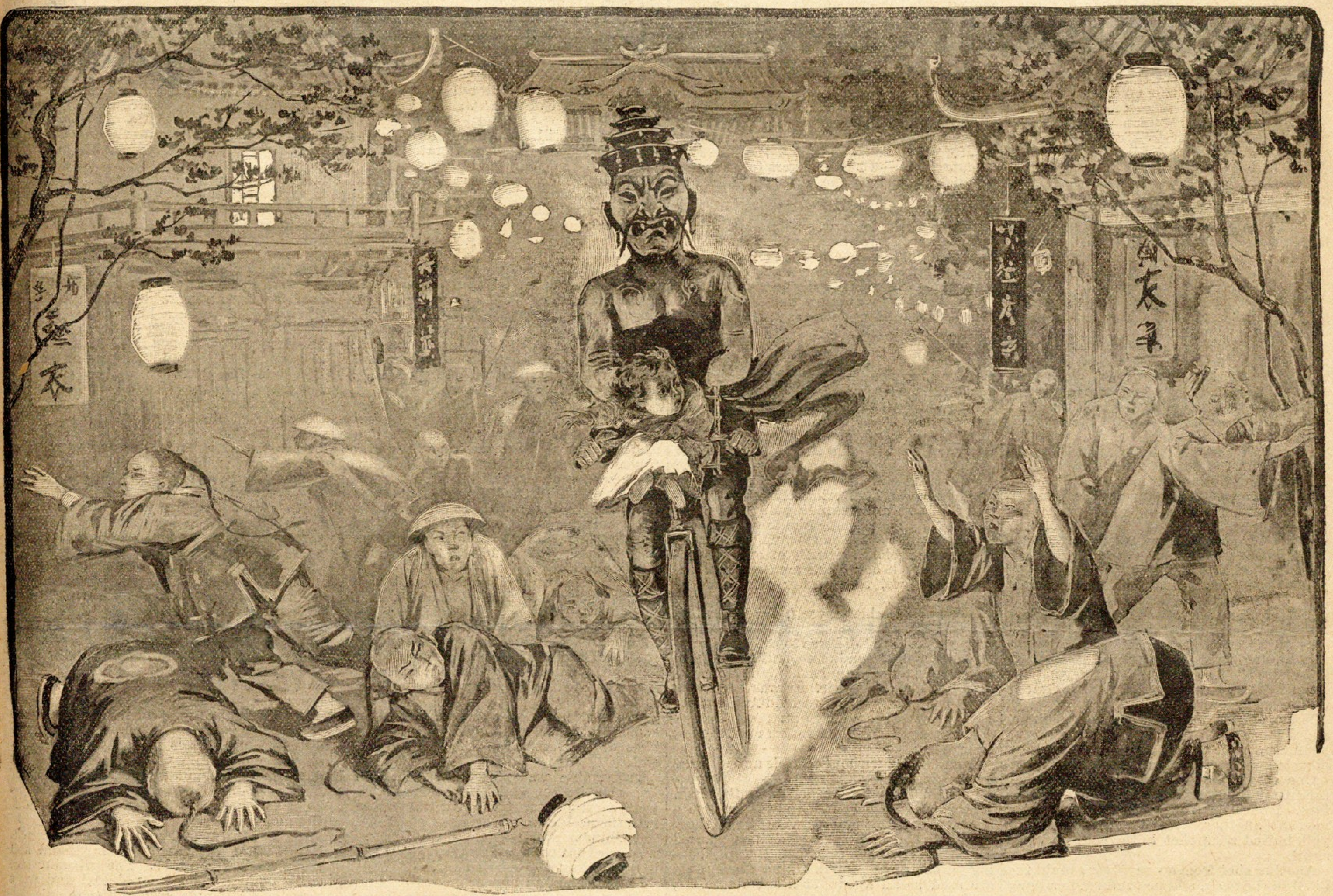

AT THE SIGHT OF THEIR GOD NAN FUH GONE MAD THEY SHRIEKED AND THREW THEMSELVES UPON THE GROUND.

A BICYCLE JOSS.*

BY SEWARD W. HOPKINS,

Author of "In the China Sea," "Two Gentlemen of Hawaii," "Darby, the Bear-Hunter of Alaska," etc.

This Story is Complete in This Number.

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CHAPTER I.

AT the breaking out of the war between China and Japan I had been sent by the manager of the Foreign News Department of the great New York daily upon which I was a special correspondent, to the scene of hostilities, with orders to stay until it was all over, and send the news as fast as I could, at any expense. I was chosen, I believe, not so much because I was a good correspondent as for the fact that I was an expert bicycle rider. I was twenty-four. unmarried, and full of ambition, and in two days after I received my orders I had equipped myself with a new bicycle, one of the best American makes, and a double set of repair tools, and off I went toward San Francisco, thence to Yokohama, where my letters and credentials at once placed me in good standing with Marshal Yumisi, of Yamagata's division, who was just starting for the seat of war. I accompanied him on a troop-ship, landed at Che-foo, rode to Pekin for the fun of it, nearly got killed for my sport, and then went up into the province of Chingking and down on the *Regent's Sword* to Port Arthur. For several months I swung backward and forward, always too quick for either army on the move, and always a source of wonder or superstition to the Chinese who saw me. I had several adventures, but I am going to tell but one, and must skip all these months and get down to the time that I found myself at Newchang, on the coast, with a small detachment of Japs, with Yamagata's forces somewhere about two hundred miles to the north, up near Moukden. A great battle was expected to be fought there, and I wanted to see it; so, in spite of all remonstrances, I obtained a passport, or "privilege to travel," from the Governor-General of Chingking, and set off alone toward the north. I knew that the farther I got from the coast, the more danger I ran into, for there the Chinamen were more savage and less under control.

I had gone about one hundred and ten miles, and was running along on a lonely road, when suddenly I was startled by a wild scream of despair which burst through the bamboos that grew thick along the roadside. Then came blood-curdling, demoniac yells—a horrid mingling of shouts and cries, shrill and hoarse, the noise of a few guns and the groans of men and women in agony.

"What now?" I asked myself, pedaling slowly, and peering anxiously in the direction whence came the horrid sounds.

I had not known that I was near a town; yet now, as I came upon a road that crossed the great northward path I was on, I saw, not more than two hundred yards to the east, a temple, and a number of low, thatched houses, evidently of the lowest class of town dwellings, and between these and me an excited mob of pig-tailed Chinamen, circling round what appeared to be a few Americans. From the Chinamen came the horrid shouts and yells, and from the unfortunates in the center came the cries of distress.

I had come suddenly upon a mob riot and missionary massacre.

One glance at the fiendish forms, with their peculiar garb, the back of the coat bearing the round target of the army, was enough to inform me that these were members of the worst sect in China—the Red-Hand Society—who

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are members of the army, but as ready to disobey the commands from Pekin as to obey them, and as willing to shed blood against their country as for it, so long as their own beastly passions and thirst for slaughter and plunder can be satisfied.

My first impulse was to turn my bicycle and flee at once. Single-handed, I knew I could do nothing against the hundred or more devils in that horde, and, instead of saving the lives of the unfortunates already doomed, any temerity on my part would result merely in losing my own life.

As I was about to act on this impulse, a wilder scream than I had yet heard came from the group, and I stood spellbound with horror as I saw a hideous ruffian plunge a spear into a man, who, I judged, was about fifty years of age.

As he fell to the ground, the dancing demons around him shouted in their demoniac glee, and spears were waved in the direction of the temple, for the Red Hands of the interior get their title from the horrid rite of their society of bathing their hands in the blood of their victims before their idol in the temple.

As I stood there, sick with horror, yet seemingly unable to tear myself away from the gruesome scene, there was a commotion in the group, and a woman burst through, bearing a child in her arms, and ran directly toward me.

The white face, streaming hair and terror-stricken eyes of the woman held me powerless to leave the spot. As she drew nearer, I saw that she was wounded. Behind her came a dozen or more of her persecutors, howling and shrieking in their devilish blood-drunkenness, and again breaking out in hideous yells when they saw me, another victim for their god, Nan Fuh.

"Oh, sir!" panted the fleeing woman, in piteous tones of appeal, as she drew rapidly near me, "save my child! You saw my husband fall! I am wounded and doomed to die. But my precious babe—God help you to save her life! Will you? *Will you?*"

As if impelled by some overmastering power, the will to disobey which I did not possess, I put out my hands for the child.

"To my daughter! To my daughter!" cried the woman. "Tell her all! Take her out of China! The Red Hands are roused! The missionaries are all to be killed!"

"Your name? Your daughter's name?" I cried, for the advancing monsters were almost upon us, and the woman was reeling in weakness from terror and the loss of blood.

"My name is Suydam! Grace Suydam my daughter—at Ning Wing!"

A foremost runner of the Chinamen was now close up to us, and his face wore a frightful grin as he raised his spear. I drew my revolver and shot him dead.

"Don't!" cried the woman. "You waste time and powder! You cannot fight against a hundred! Leave me before you are stricken down! Save my babe! Save Grace! God be with you!"

Three of the demons were now upon us, and I stood with my revolver in my right hand, the babe in my left arm, my trusty bicycle leaning against my leg.

One of the fiends leaped toward me. I raised my revolver and fired plump in his face. He fell dead at my feet. At the same moment another, with a perfectly hellish yell, buried a hatchet in the poor woman's skull.

Another shot from my revolver caught the devil in the neck, and he tumbled headlong upon his victim.

A hasty glance showed me that not three but fifty of the demons were now coming in response to the cries of their comrades. In a moment both the child and myself would be doomed. The child was clad in a strong cloth dress, and, with a quick motion, I mounted my wheel and darted away toward the north, the child resting before me in a sort of basket made of her own dress, which I clutched with both hands on the handles.

A renewal of the shouts behind me was the exhibition of the rage of the fiends that I was leaving.

A few spears whizzed by me, and I heard a few shots, but the interior Chinamen are armed, if with guns at all, only with old matchlocks, with which accurate aim is impossible.

I heard the patter of their wooden shoes behind, at first loud and threatening, then growing fainter. With my body bent like that of a sprinter, I was working the pedals with all my soul and energy centered in my feet.

The tremendous rate of speed at which I was travelling soon carried me away from my pursuers, and in ten minutes I was so far beyond them that I could no longer hear their yells.

Slowing up, I worked along for ten or twelve miles, easing up the uncomfortable position of my little charge by taking her in my left arm and using only my right to steady and guide my machine.

I now came to another crossing of roads, the one I was on continuing straight toward the north, and the other crossing it from east to west.

Considering myself safe for a time, I dismounted, and sat down on a stone, with the child rolling in the yellow silk-grass beside me, to think over the strangeness of my situation and to form some kind of a plan.

To begin, I did not know exactly where I was, or where Ning Wing was. I knew that Marshal Yamagata's forces were somewhere to the north, and the country between him and me teeming with Red Hands. Anyhow, Yamagata's position was not now my destination. I had a higher purpose than the gathering of war news. As if by the direct act of God, the child of Mrs. Suydam had been given to me to save, and I resolved to bend all my energies to carrying out the wishes of the martyred mother.

I carried with me a map of China, and I pulled this from my pocket to study it. I had heretofore learned that a map of China, no matter whose, was more likely to be wrong than right, but such as it was, I was compelled to accept it as a guide.

After considerable study I found Ning Wing on the map. Then, judging from the distance my cyclometer told me I had travelled since leaving Newchang, I followed an imaginary line where I thought the road ought to be, and brought my pencil to a town called Hoshow, where I believed the massacre had taken place. Then on north as far as I thought I had travelled with the babe, and I brought my pencil down on a perfectly bare spot on the map where, I concluded, was the crossing of roads at which I sat. From here to Ning Wing, according to the map, was due west about one hundred miles, and between where I sat and Ning Wing was the Lian-ho River and a town called Kwong Fuh. I shuddered when I saw this, for I had heard from Japanese scouts that Kwong Fuh was a half fortified city of some ten thousand inhabitants, most all of whom were either Red Hands, Vegetarians, or professional brigands, and the Nan Fuh temples were the headquarters for the most devilish work that the distorted minds of human demons could devise.

Here, indeed, was the prospect of a century run, with plenty of excitement.

But my work was before me. I had in my care the three-year-old babe of the dead missionary, and the dying cries of the unfortunate mother still rang in my ears. At Ning Wing was another daughter, and I had been called upon to save both. With God's help, I would do it.

I felt rather hungry, and from my haversack took some lunch, which I divided with my little companion, making her a palatable cup of milk with water from a neighboring brook and my condensed milk. The little one informed me that her name was "Angie," though from her pronunciation I could not tell whether this was the abbreviation of Angeline or a mother's pet name of "Angel." Anyhow, it did not matter, and Angie ate her lunch, chattering the while, without the least understanding of the terrible loss she had sustained. She kept asking if the bad men would soon let mamma come. With voice choking with emotion, I answered her, keeping her amused, but not daring, as yet, to tell her the dreadful truth.

Having refreshed myself, I prepared to move again.

The first thing I did was to cut some bamboo slips, split them in two, and weave them into a rude but strong basket, which I fastened to the handle-bar. It was capacious enough and of a shape to hold Angie without danger of her falling out.

Mounting, I took the western road toward Ning Wing.

I went along without trouble until I came to the Lian-ho.

I cautiously looked up and down the river. Toward the south I saw two or three houseboats. Toward the north were two or three small flat boats with fishermen in them, and cormorants perched in bow and stern, looking for their prey, for in China cormorants are used as an aid to, or a substitute for, angling.

Judging the fishermen to belong to the farmer class, which is not at all to be dreaded, I rode up near one and beckoned to him. He answered my call, and for a small sum I engaged him to pole me across. He eyed my bicycle suspiciously, but pocketed his fee with satisfaction, and I was soon on the other side.

Once more on the road, I again set off, but now I found a new difficulty. The road *to* the river had been fairly smooth, evidently used by the farmers of the vicinity; but leading from the river westward, it was a rough, hummocky path, and I could not get along on it. I tried it in the silk grass at the side, and found here that though progress was slow, I got along without so much jolting, but had to stop now and then to free the wheels from the long grass that became entangled in them.

After several hours of this work, which was laborious in the extreme, I felt weary, and stopped to rest. It was now growing dark, and my cyclometer told me I had travelled nearly half the supposed distance to Ning Wing. As near as I could make out, I was about three miles from Kwong Fuh, the terrible city. I resolved to wait where I was, have a good rest, regain my exhausted strength, have my supper, and then, when darkness befriended me, make the attempt to pass Kwong Fuh.

Angie and I ate heartily, and then the mite, tired out, laid her weary little head in my lap and slept soundly for three hours. For me there was no sleep. Sleep was and should be a stranger to my eyes until I laid my innocent charge in the arms of her sister at Ning Wing.

When Angie woke, seemingly refreshed after her nap, it was quite dark, and the silence of solitude was around us. I placed her again in her bamboo basket, and loading my revolver, set off toward Kwong Fuh.

On I sped, the three miles I had judged the distance to Kwong Fuh lengthening into five, and as I drew near the dreaded place I found to my great joy that the road was smooth. I increased my speed, and was soon going along at a tremendous pace, when suddenly I heard a babel of voices, and, to my horror, I burst into full view of a great throng of people moving toward me. It was some kind of a procession, and at the head walked several priests of some order, swinging perfumed lamps before them to light their way.

When Angie saw them she cried out in fear, for she recognized the bad men who were keeping her father and mother from her.

I tried to turn, but as I did so another crowd burst from the trees along the road.

I knew that to show fight, and shoot one or two of the mob, would exasperate the others and make my own predicament worse.

Thinking that here, like some of the other places I had seen, the road ran past the town a little to one side, I again sped forward, hoping to break through the ranks of the paraders and get out into the open country, where I knew I could easily leave them behind. But alas! the road took a turn, and I rode straight into the main street of the city, ablaze with the light of thousands of lanterns and torches, the temples of which were festooned with colored lights, and the entire populace of which was out in festival attire.

And worse still, I saw hundreds of soldiers from the defeated and exasperated army of General Chin Yih, mingling fraternally with Red Hands, Vegetarians and brigands.

At my sudden appearance a great shout went up, and I was immediately surrounded. Progress was impossible, and as I slowed up I was forced from my wheel, and was seized upon by four soldiers, two others fighting over Angie, and carrying her off.

None of them would touch the bicycle, and it lay on the ground where it had fallen, the center of an awe-stricken group, and the wild jargon of tongues that arose all around me indicated that they were greatly excited, and looked upon the wheel as an unnatural and, perhaps—I hoped so, at least—a supernatural thing.

None of this awe attached to me, however, and I was hustled away through a long street of flaming lanterns to the house of the head man, or mayor. This grand functionary was sitting on the balcony of his house, and in the light of a hundred lanterns and torches around him I saw the gaudily embroidered robe and the ruby button on his cap which proclaimed him to be a military mandarin, or Kwan, of high degree, and also the head man of Kwong Fuh.

As I was led up to him, followed by some thousand or more grinning, shouting devils, the situation may be justly described as exciting. The mandarin rose in the dignity of his high office, and waited for my captors to speak. This they did in their own tongue, and the mandarin turned to me, and, speaking in pigeon English, difficult to transcribe, said:

"Who are you, foreign devil, that you come into the sacred city of Kwong at the time of the festival of the great god Nan Fuh?"

Truly, this was pleasant. Nan Fuh I knew to be the god before whom victims were sacrificed, that the Red Hands might lave themselves in the crimson blood.

A Chinaman now came up with Angie, who cried out to me, and was roughly shaken by the fellow who carried her.

I maintained an appearance of calmness, and solemnly showed the passport from the Governor-General of the province. The mandarin looked at it, and then darted upon me a suspicious glance.

"Ho!" he said. "This is a passport for one. It says nothing about a child, nor a machine. I am told you fly on a machine that stands up when you are on it and falls down when you get off. The Governor-General says nothing of that."

I tried to explain my bicycle to him, and he ordered it brought before him. No matter if it was death to touch the wheel, it was equally fatal to disobey the mandarin, so two of the soldiers brought the bicycle in between them. They stood it up, and it fell down.

"See!" said the mandarin. "It is the truth! The Governor-General has been made the victim of a lie. This is how we deal with such foreign devils."

He thereupon tore my passport into bits. and uttered a few words to the men about him.

"To the temple of Nan Fuh!" they cried. And I was seized and carried off, followed by the wondering, fanatical crowd, who saw only a possible victim for their chosen god.

I was taken into a large temple, the sides of which were gayly decorated, and the ceiling strung with lanterns, the floor tiled, and at the farther end, perched on a pedestal of carved wood, was an idol a little larger than a man, of perfectly hideous appearance, wearing, from the waist down, a loose, flowing gown of embroidered silk.

This was Nan Fuh, and the fresh blood on the altar before him told that his festival had been celebrated by the sacrifice of victims. I knew that Angie and I were to be slaughtered to make the holiday complete.

The instinct of self-preservation was strong in me, and I alertly noticed everything around me. What struck me most forcibly was that whenever a Chinaman came directly before the hideous idol, he dropped flat on the floor in obeisance.

When we were fairly in the temple, Angie and the bicycle being carried along with me, a cry went up from the multitude, and the mandarin, who had come with his staff of rascally officers, demanded that I show them how the devil-machine worked.

I knew that, although they hated me for my foreign face, and would ruthlessly slay Angie and me before their god, they felt some awe when the bicycle or devil-machine was near them. A desperate though half-formed idea shot through my brain, and I turned to the mandarin, and said:

"This is Bicycle, the traveller's Joss. He is powerful to protect his worshipers, and can destroy in his anger all who oppose his will."

The mandarin looked at me incredulously.

"Yes," I said, "he is more powerful than your god Nan Fuh. Let your soldiers try to fly on his back."

This tickled the mandarin's love of amusement, and he ordered one of his soldiers to try it. The frightened victim grasped the handles, tried to get on, and tumbled to the floor. In his excitement he rang the alarm gong—the loudest I could find in New York—and a startled exclamation came from the audience.

"The Joss is mad," I said, with a show of asperity. "Let me show you his great power."

Besides the gong, I was also the possessor of that devilish contrivance of modern civilization, a toy siren-whistle. Putting this in my mouth, I jumped onto the machine and blew a great blast on the whistle, rang the gong like mad, and sprinted around the temple as though the energy of demons was in my feet. I at once saw the sensation I had created, and blew and rang louder than before, while the astonished heathen stood, helpless from astonishment, looking at me.

Veering suddenly, I ran into a group, knocking two down and scattering the others with cries of terror, not so loud, however, as my awful whistle. This sort of thing proved to be a huge success. I ran round and round, darted hither and thither, knocking the Chinamen right and left, until it was a matter of doubt whether I or Nan Fuh had the greater number down before us.

The mandarin stood horror-stricken. Even the warlike Japanese had not knocked men down like that.

At last, with a scream, a number ran from the temple, crying, "Devil! Devil!" and the mandarin had all he could do to restrain the others. Fortunately, the bamboo basket had not been injured, and as I went by the fellow who held Angie, I snatched her from his arms and placed her in the basket, telling her to hang on.

I felt safe for the present, but there was no telling when the revulsion would come and the courage of the mob return. I could have ridden out of the temple, and no hand would have been stretched out to stop me, but outside there were thousands who had not seen me, who knew nothing of the terrible, destructive force of the devil-machine, and these, I knew, would soon bring my triumphant career to an ignominious close.

Yet, I must do something to escape while the spell was on in the temple, and while I did some prodigious thinking, I blew the siren like mad, rang the gong and knocked down more Chinamen, even at the risk of hurting poor little Angie, to whom this was a circus devoid of all its horrible possibilities and dangers.

In wheeling near the terrible-looking god, Nan Fuh, I stretched out my hand and grasped his silken robe. The grinning idol came bounding off its pedestal and went careering after me around the temple. A thrill shot through me. The thing was so light, I knew at once it must be hollow, and there, still on the pedestal, I saw the god's wooden legs, where his flying body had left them.

As I went sailing round the temple, those fellows that I did not knock down either knelt before the plunging idol or ran shrieking in terror from the place.

Now, seeing my great advantage, I resolved upon a still more desperate act. The mandarin was the coolest and bravest of the lot, and apparently the most cruel and bloodthirsty. It was his life or Angie's and mine, and my sympathies were all one way. I rode straight at him, dropped the robe of Nan Fuh, drew my revolver in an instant, and sent a bullet crashing into his skull. My whistle screamed out its awful notes, my gong rang, and the entire horde, seeing the mandarin lying dead beside the body of their disjointed idol, ran helter-skelter from the temple.

I knew what to do, and I lost no time in doing it. I examined the idol and found it was made of a sort of papier-mache, and was large enough to fit over the upper part of my body.

I hastily put it on, and as it settled down over my shoulders, my head went into *its* head, and I punched out its eyes of sapphire, put them in my pocket, and tucked the skirts of the idol up around me out of the way of the pedals and wheels.

Then, with a burst of speed, I went out of the temple into the brilliant and crowded street.

Remember, it was the occasion of the festival of the god Nan Fuh. Most of the people were drunk with rice-liquor, and the effect on their disordered imaginations as I rode out can only be fancied.

As I sprinted forth, the sound of my siren whistle and my loud gong, attracted the attention of the throngs of pleasure-seekers in the streets, and at the sight of their god, Nan Fuh, gone mad on the occasion of his own great festival, they shrieked and threw themselves upon the ground.

I did not know how to get out of Kwong

Fuh, on the side toward Ning Wing, and wound slowly in and around several crooked streets before I found the main road. When I at last found it, I sped on westward, and as the last faint shouts of the Kwong Fuh fanatics reached my ears, I thanked God that he had enabled me to escape and save Angie's life.

Then I stopped, and disentangling myself from the idol, I tumbled the ill-favored and ill-smelling thing into a ditch by the roadside and sped on again.

For fifty miles I sped along, not daring once to stop. At last, at the break of day, I saw the pagodas and towers of the missionary town lifting their heads up into the gray dawn of the morning, and I rode calmly and triumphantly into Ning Wing.

It was early, but the people were astir, and the contrast between the inhabitants of Ning Wing and those of Kwong Fuh was great indeed.

They looked at me with considerable wonder, but did not offer to molest me, the coming and going of the members of the missionary colony being so frequent that a white face was not a novelty. I inquired for the missionary quarters, and found them to be a group of comfortable houses around a church, and the streets of Ning Wing near them showed the effect of the teachings and example of the Christians.

Upon being introduced to Grace Suydam, I found her to be a beautiful girl of nineteen, graceful and accomplished, and my heart went out to her in sympathy as I told her the sorrowful story of her parents' martyrdom. She wept a great deal when she had learned the truth, and little Angie was petted and cried over by the entire colony of missionaries.

Much against my will, they insisted on making a sort of hero of me, and I found many warm friends among the brave Christians at Ning Wing.

After the first outburst of grief, Grace became calm, and acting upon her mother's wishes, began to prepare for her journey to the coast, where she would take ship to Hong Kong or Yokohama, and thence to America.

There was little to be done, and most of that was by me. The other missionaries refused to leave, saying that no Red Hands dared come into Ning Wing, but all agreed that it was Grace's duty to return to America with little Angie—Angeline, as I found—and as she had an aunt living in one of the cities of New York State, with whom she knew she would be welcome, she decided to go to her at once.

The mayor of Ning Wing was a very different man from the fellow at Kwong Fuh. To begin, he was a civil and not a military mandarin, and had none of the vices and cruelties that seem to belong to the latter class. Moreover, he was an educated, progressive man, and regretted the heathenish practices of his less enlightened countrymen. He was much enraged when I told him about the massacre, and when I related my adventure at Kwong Fuh he laughed heartily and slapped me on the back. He also procured a passport to the coast for Grace, Angie and myself, and this time it even included the *devil*-machine, which was quaintly described in the passport as "a two-wheeled wagon without a horse."

I next hired a cart and team of small horses and a coolie driver, and with Grace and Angie seated in this vehicle, and I on my trusty bicycle, we bade good-bye to our missionary friends, and set out for the coast. We passed to the southward a few miles to escape Kwong Fuh, and then went on to the east.

Our progress was slow, owing to the clumsy little horses, and we encamped over night, Grace and Angie sleeping contentedly on the soft, silk grass, while I kept watch with my revolver handy.

At the end of the next day we were fortunate enough to fall in with Marshal Yumisi's detachment, which was on the march north to meet Yamagata. Yumisi was pleased to see me again, and offered me an escort to the coast, which I gladly accepted.

We arrived at Port Arthur in safety, and found that in one week a transport ship was to go back to Japan with wounded soldiers. We remained at Port Arthur in the meantime, and Grace and I were together most of the time. There seemed to be in the dear girl's mind an extravagant idea of what I had done, and though I told her I had often been in as bad scrapes as that, she persisted in looking upon me as the preserver of Angie's life and perhaps her own.

The result of it was that I fell in love with Grace, and before the transport left Port Arthur I had won her promise to be my wife, and had felt the thrill of a lover when I kissed her sweet mouth and brought the rosy blushes to her pale cheeks.

When at last the sailing day came, we learned that two ladies of the Red Cross Society—something far different than the Red Hand—were also going to Japan with the wounded, and they gladly consented to take Grace and Angie under their sheltering care. I kissed my dear ones fondly, and Grace promised to wait for me at Yokohama, until such time as I could join her there.

When the ship had left, I stood on the quay at Port Arthur, looking sadly and longingly after it. But I had duties to perform, and once more I bestrode my bicycle and set off toward the north, and caught Marshal Yumisi before he had gone half the distance to Yamagata's position.

We reached the main army, and Count Yamagata received me with marked favor. I was just in time to witness a great battle, and did so, acting as a staff officer, and then, on Yamagata's march, which he made toward Pekin, I had the extreme satisfaction of seeing the town of Kwong Fuh practically wiped off the earth.

When the war in the north was over, I hurried to Yokohama, the field in the south, Formosa, Hong Kong and other southern points being covered by an associate. I found Grace and Angie living quietly under the care of the Red Cross and the United States Consul, and our reunion was a happy one.

We left Yokohama together on the *Mariposa*, and on our journey home the ties of love were strengthened. And now we are snugly ensconced, all three of us, in the happiest, if not the most luxurious, home in New York City.

THE END.

BICYCLE NOTES.

When men and women go a-wheeling with the mercury skirmishing around the zero point and make regular trips to and from business or run of errands and call on their friends, there is little question as to the future of this important aid to locomotion.

The special interest in the case, just now, is the wide tire, and one that is practically non-puncturable. There are several new ideas in tack-proof tires, one of the most sensible of which is made with a layer of cork, between the outer rim, or shoe, and the tube. This cork is necessarily light and rather difficult to stick things through; indeed, nothing short of a head-on collision would seem to be able to prevail against it. There is another improvement being worked out, which has fair prospects of a brilliant success. This is a little chain armor plate of aluminum. It is made of very small sections of the metal, locked together, something after the style of old-fashioned armor. It lines the outer half of the shoe of the tire, and its sponsors declare that nothing short of a hammer and nail can get through it. It is as pliable and elastic as the rubber itself, the sections being not over three-eighths of an inch across.

The notable features of 1896 wheels are larger tubing and larger hubs. The large hubs are thought to be a very great improvement over the old style, as they allow much larger balls in the bearings, with consequent immense decrease in the friction. The evolution in ladies' wheels is more noticeable than on those for men. Of course, the dress-guards are strictly feminine rigging and add necessarily to the weight; but every effort is made to reduce the weight in other respects as much as is consistent with strength and safety.

What will be the action of manufacturers as to prices for 1896 is a feature that is of great interest to the community at large. If 1895 witnessed a phenomenal increase in the demand for bicycles, 1896 is going to rival its predecessors in this regard. The country is full of people who have not yet learned to ride, and they are getting the fever.

There are new styles in bicycles. One of these is a crystalizing of the "bicycle-built-for-two" idea. The parcel carrier is familiar to the residents of many cities. The latest notion is a passenger carrier. In localities where there are few or no hills there are tricycles that suggest the jinriksha of Japanese fame. This form of tricycle is arranged to carry passengers, and is to be brought into use at railway stations, and at various points in large cities. It is said that within the next year or two a lady may take a tricycle as she now takes a cab, but at a trifle of the cost of the latter.

WOMEN AND THE BICYCLE.

A woman should always select a machine with a wide space between the steering center and saddle-post truss, said a veteran instructor, as it makes mounting much easier. You know a woman mounts from the front, pushing herself back on the saddle, while a man mounts in exactly the opposite way. If your wheel has this wide space, and you put your right foot on the pedal, pull your skirt around in the back, and press the bust hard against the handle-bar, you will find that mounting is easy, and that four-fifths of your skirt won't be hanging on the left side when you get up.

The fashionable way to ride now is to sit well forward and erect in the saddle, getting the full reach of the leg. A full reach of the arm as well as the leg is also desirable, for besides being the most graceful way of riding it is the easiest. If the arm is bent, one soon becomes very tired, but if it has full play, and the handle-bar is grasped very loosely, it becomes a simple matter to ride any distance.

Many ride with the handle-bars too high. The proper way is to put the post of the bar well down into the head of the wheel, turning the adjustable bar up to meet the reach. Then, too, in selecting a wheel, never buy one with too long a crank, as one over five and a half or six inches gives too wide a circle and throws the knees up in an ungraceful way. If possible, get a crank without pins through it, for then you are in no danger of getting your skirts caught.

In selecting a saddle, get one with a backward and forward adjustment, and let it be pretty wide, with a short peak. A narrow handle-bar is much the best, as a wide and high one involves a great deal of lost motion.

A HISTORIC PARK.

[Once the "Old David Burns Farm," now the most fashionable portion of the Capital. Some of the most famous leaders in Cabinet, Senate, war and diplomacy who have resided upon its borders.]

BY MRS. F. G. DE FONTAINE.

The small, green parallelogram facing the White House, and bounded by Pennsylvania, Vermont and Connecticut Avenues and H Street, might well be christened "Cabinet Park," for around it have lived at different times the official families of seventeen Presidents.

Although but a century old, it is one of the most interesting localities in the United States. During the Revolution it was plowed and planted as a farm by David Burns, and when, in 1790, Washington selected the site of the executive mansion, he defined the boundaries of the park opposite, and called it after his illustrious friend and ally, "Lafayette."

It was a favorite residential portion of the beautiful city long before General Ross, with his redcoats, marched across it to burn the White House, on the 24th of August, 1814, saying: "I'll make a cow-pasture of these Yankee Capitol grounds."

General Armstrong, hearing the British threat, said:

"What can they get in this sheep-walk? If they want to do anything they must go to Baltimore, not come to this barren wilderness."

General Ross was of a different opinion, however, and determined to lay waste Washington before making an attempt on Baltimore.

In the American metropolis, then in the fifteenth year of its existence, the British found about nine hundred houses, scattered in groups over a surface of three miles, and two splendid buildings, the Capitol, then still unfinished, and the President's house, these being among the finest specimens of architecture in the New World.

But beautiful though they were, the British incendiary laid them in ruins.

When they entered President Madison's dining-room, they found a dinner-table spread, and covers laid for forty guests. Several kinds of wine, in cut-glass decanters, were cooling on the sideboard, while dishes, plates, knives and forks were arranged as for immediate use for the entertainment of a ceremonious party.

In the kitchen, spits loaded with savory joints turned before the fire; pots, saucepans and other culinary utensils stood near by, and everything indicated that a hasty retreat had just been made.

To the hungry Britishers, the sight was ravishing; and they did full justice to the American feast, and satiated their appetites by liberal draughts of the Presidential wines. This finished, the incendiary's torch was applied and a carnival of violence and plunder followed that would disgrace even the thugs of India. A heavy rainfall saved the White House from entire destruction, and it was rebuilt in 1817, when the red sandstone was painted white to erase the traces of the fire, hence its name, "White House."

It was amid these exciting scenes, especially the bombardment of Fort McHenry, that Francis Key, who was on the spot at the time, composed that stirring song, "The Star-Spangled Banner."

President Madison had sent Key with a flag of truce to Admiral Cockburn's ship, asking for the exchange of his friend, Doctor Beans. He was informed that he would have to remain on board ship until after the bombardment of the city. He shared his friend's uncomfortable quarters that night, and at sunset saw the "Star-Spangled Banner" wave proudly from the ramparts of Fort McHenry.

After that night of battle, made fearful by the thunders of cannon and the explosion of bombs, the mist was too dense to discover whether "the flag" or the red cross of St. George floated from the fort. Presently, as if by magic, the mist rolled away, and the two friends, who had been watching in suspense through the portholes, saw the American flag still proudly and defiantly floating from its staff above the ramparts. The patriots fell in each other's arms, weeping for joy. Francis Key then drew a letter from his pocket, and on its back pencilled the first stanzas of the celebrated national song.

Not less exciting than the attack in 1814 have been some of the scenes enacted in and around Lafayette Park in more recent times.

On the east side of the park stood the club-house of which Sickles and Barton Key were both members.

This house was originally the *élite* boarding house of Washington, having numbered among its guests John C. Calhoun, when he was Jackson's Secretary of War and Vice-President, and Henry Clay, when he was Adams's Secretary of State; then it became the property of the celebrated Washington Club, where assembled the rich and influential men of the Capital. Later it was the residence of Secretary Seward, and there the deadly assault was made upon him by the assassin Payne. More recently it was renovated for the home of James G. Blaine, the third Secretary of State who dwelt within its walls and the seventh who lived upon the park.

On the corner, diagonally opposite the Arlington Hotel, occupying the great mastic building erected by James Madison in 1801 and occupied by him while Jefferson's Secretary of State, is the Cosmos, the largest scientific club in the world. "Dolly" Madison returned there twenty years later, after her husband's death, and for fifteen years dispensed a gracious hospitality and reigned a queen. It afterward became the residence of Admiral Wilkes, when Slidell, whom he was soon to take off a British ship on the high seas, lived within a stone's throw.

In the next two houses have dwelt Secretary Windom and Senator Fenton; and in the next below Admiral Paulding, a son of the soldier, John Paulding, who captured Major André. It is now owned by Senator Don Cameron.

Across Vermont Avenue, directly opposite the Arlington, is the small two-story house in which lived for many years that brave officer, Commodore Morris, who commanded the *Pensacola* before New Orleans, evincing the same energy on sea that his grandfather, Robert Morris, did when, as Washington's officer of finance, he made the Revolution a success.

Almost all the houses on the west side of the park have been occupied from time to time by prominent officials, among them Secretary Levi Woodbury, of Van Buren's Cabinet; Secretary John C. Spencer, of Tyler's Cabinet; General Sickles and Vice-President Colfax.

The Arlington Hotel now stands on the site formerly occupied by three stately mansions. One was occupied by William L. Marcy, Secretary of War under President Polk and Secretary of State under President Pierce.

Lewis Cass, Secretary of State under Buchanan, also resided in that house and the one adjoining. In the third mansion dwelt Reverdy Johnson, Minister to England, and there Presidents Buchanan and Harrison were entertained prior to their inauguration.

The front of the Arlington Hotel, looking on H Street, embodies the former residences of Charles Sumner and Senator Pomeroy, the windows looking directly upon the White House. From these rooms President Cleveland went to his inauguration.

In the large, double mansion adjoining, once lived Sir Bulwer Lytton and his not less famous son and secretary, "Owen Meredith," now Lord Lytton, who is said to have written his most famous poem "Lucille" in this house. In later years it was occupied by Lord Ashburton, who, assisted by Daniel Webster and Featherstonhaugh, drafted the "Ashburton Treaty," which defined our Canadian boundary. John Nelson, Attorney-General in Tyler's Cabinet, also resided here.

A famous old landmark, St. John's Episcopal Church, known as the "Court Church," stands at the corner of Sixteenth Street. It was built after the War of 1812, with the earnest encouragement of President Madison. Nearly every President has attended service here, hence its name "Court Church."

Across the street Lincoln's secretary, John Hay, and Henry Adams, grandson of John Quincy Adams, had their residences. Next to Mr. Adams lived Senator Slidell before he was Confederate Ambassador to France. The corner house immediately adjoining that of Slidell was owned and occupied by Daniel Webster during the whole period when he was Secretary of State. It was afterwards purchased by the philanthropist, W. W. Corcoran. During the War it was occupied by M. Montholon, the French Minister to this Capital. It has always been the scene of the most lavish hospitality, and now, as the home of Senator Brice, its possibilities are not limited.

Admiral Shubrick, Judge Bancroft Davis and the distinguished historian, George Bancroft, had their homes on the opposite corner.

Directly opposite the residence of Daniel Webster is the antique, solid house of Commodore Decatur, built after the War of 1812, and in which he died in 1820, on returning from his duel at Bladensburg, where he was mortally wounded by Commodore Barron. This house was afterwards occupied successively by Henry Clay, Martin Van Buren, Vice-President; Edward Livingston, Jackson's Secretary of State; George M. Dallas, Vice-President; Senator Judah P. Benjamin, afterwards Attorney-General, Secretary of War and Secretary of State of the Southern Confederacy, and subsequently Queen's Counsel in England. General Grant was a guest in this house, for weeks at a time when it was occupied by General Beale.

Van Buren had a window cut in the south wall of the house in order that he might see the signals displayed by Jackson from the White House.

Many more distinguished names could be added to those which have centered around the statue of "Old Hickory," but those already mentioned are sufficient to mark it the most historical spot in the United States.

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IN SEARCH OF GOLD.*

BY COLIN MIDDLETON,

Author of "The Fool of Destiny," "Innes of Blairavon," etc.

["IN SEARCH OF GOLD" was commenced in No. 52. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

CHAPTER XV—*(Continued).*

AT last Anatole began to become really ill. He no longer slept at night, and his appetite failed him completely. He implored Ivor almost daily to allow them to be married. He explained that it was maddening to be always so near and yet so far from his beloved; that it was beyond all words embarrassing to be compelled to conduct his courtship under the surveillance of others. Not that he minded Ivor and Beausire witnessing his transports; but this sailor, who was little more than an animal, it was galling to know that he was always on the lookout, with his brutal leer, for that at which to jeer. Beausire and Ivor discussed the matter very earnestly.

"If you don't let the fellow marry her, he will go raving mad. We don't want a raving lunatic on this delightful island. There is no room for him," said Beausire.

"But how the deuce can he be married in law?"

"Easily enough. They are both Roman Catholics, and they can get a dispensation."

"But what ceremony are they to go through?"

"You must take the duty of priest upon yourself for the moment."

"I have no notion of what the Roman Catholic ceremony is like."

"My dear Ivor, what on earth does that matter? You surely do not think that the marriage will be any the less binding because you don't happen to be in orders. The thing is absurd. These people wish their union to be recognized by the community in which they find themselves—not a large one, perhaps, but still it represents the whole world to them for the moment. You can bind them just as solemnly as though the matter were done by law, or by bell, book and candle, or any other nonsense you like."

Ivor was somewhat taken aback by this, to him, wholly new view of marriage, and said:

"But if they are not married according to the rites of the Church, the woman cannot have any legal claim against the man in the event of desertion."

"What does that matter? People in that class of life drift apart as naturally as they drift together. It is the class just above theirs which revels in breach of promise, and a still higher class which takes every opportunity of washing its dirty linen in the Divorce Court."

"You see, there is no registry office here; and oughtn't there to be a civil and a religious ceremony as well? They are Roman Catholics."

Beausire burst out laughing.

"You old ass, Ivor. Don't you see that this form of marriage which they will go through here is simply a sop to your conscience, to prevent there being any scandal in case anything happened. You take the matter too seriously, old boy."

"Marriage is a very serious matter," said Ivor, gravely.

Beausire laughed again.

"You laugh, of course," said Ivor, "you are always laughing, but I don't see why these two people shouldn't wait to get married until they can find a priest and everything in order."

"Anatole will go mad on our hands—if you do make them wait. You don't seem to understand the temperament of a Frenchman. They don't weigh the matter up as we do, and look on this side and on that, and calculate the cost. He is in love, madly, passionately, and that is enough for him. There is only one thing on earth, for the moment, for which he finds life worth living—his love for Lola; and if he cannot attain his object he will go mad."

Ivor thought for a long time, and at last he said:

"I believe you are right, Beausire. I will make them both swear that they will be married in due order on the very earliest opportunity when we reach land, and only on that condition will I undertake the responsibility."

"That's right. I will go and tell Anatole."

"Tell him to come here."

In a few minutes Beausire returned, accompanied by Anatole, whose face wore an expression of anxious inquiry.

Ivor told him the terms on which he would consent to perform this mock marriage, and Anatole for answer merely gave vent to a vast sigh of relief, contentment, joy—he didn't exactly know what.

"When would you like the ceremony to be performed?" asked Ivor.

"*Mais*, now, instantly, monsieur. I will fetch Lola. *Holà*, Lola! Come at once!" and he began to run down to the shore to find her.

"Stop, stop!" cried Ivor, while Beausire laughed loud and long.

Anatole stopped, and came slowly back to where Ivor stood.

"What need of delay, monsieur?" asked Anatole. "Lola is willing—she has said it—and I—but I have been more than willing all these months, these centuries of time."

"But the preliminaries must be settled. Are you willing to agree to the terms which I propose?"

"But certainly," answered Anatole. "Why not? I have all the wish to remain with her for ever."

"And she?"

"She loves me, too. She has said it."

"And you will swear to get married as soon as it can possibly be done when we reach land?"

"On my word of honor, sir."

"Very well. Under these conditions I will perform what marriage ceremony I can to-morrow morning. But I must have Lola's oath as well that she consents. To-night you must swear by all that you hold sacred that you will do this."

Anatole, seeing that the interview was over for the present, bounded away over the rocks like a stag, shouting, "Lola, Lola!" at the pitch of his voice, until the cliff behind them echoed back the cry a hundred times.

That evening Anatole and Lola pledged their oath to regard the ceremony which should take place in the morning as completely binding on them; and to be married in due form as opportunity should occur.

The sailor witnessed the ceremony with a cynical smile on his surly countenance, and, when it was over, spat contemptuously on the floor.

Anatole, as soon as Lola had explained that she fully understood the nature of an oath, embraced her passionately before them all, whereupon she smacked his face and told him in Spanish that he was an uncouth foreigner.

The sailor grinned sardonically, and grunted out:

"There they are—at it already—and not even spliced yet! She'll claw his face for 'im right enough before long. Lucky there ain't no other woman in this 'ere place for 'er to get jealous of, or there'd be fine shindies."

Lola, having kissed the hands of Ivor and Beausire (in metaphor), frowned at Anatole and made a face at the sailor, retired to her own hut for the night, while Anatole sat down with a sigh, and was obviously *désolé*, though he did not say so.

The morning dawned bright and fair. It was one of those rare days in those latitudes when the west wind dies down to little more than a light breeze, and when the sun consents to shine on those moist coasts for some hours at a time. The breeze was just strong enough to crest the wavelets which lapped among the pebbles, and farther out in the sea their bigger brothers danced in the sunlight.

Anatole and Lola regarded the bright weather as a favorable omen for their life. Anatole had been awake and up with the earliest penguin, and now, after a pretense at breakfast, was awaiting his bride.

Beausire had asked him during breakfast where he intended spending his honeymoon, and suggested Inaccessible.

Anatole, whose heart was too full to speak, merely sighed in answer.

Breakfast over, Anatole strolled to the door of the hut. He had scarcely set his foot outside when he gave vent to a loud yell which brought Ivor and Beausire, with a bound, to the door.

"*Regardez!*" almost shrieked Anatole; and as he spoke he pointed leeward.

Far away on the eastern horizon the smoke of a steamer was plainly visible.

With a simultaneous cry of "A ship!" from Ivor, and "A ship, by thunder!" from Beausire, they turned and ran to the point on the northeastern corner of the island, where they had watched day in and day out for months for that which never came.

Lola, awakened for a moment from her characteristic lethargy, gathered up her skirts and followed them. Anatole, 'twixt love and anxiety, hesitated a moment, and then followed Lola; while the sailor, after first scanning the approaching smoke carefully, slowly brought up the rear.

CHAPTER XVI.

RESCUED.

Standing at the extreme edge of the projecting rock, Ivor and Beausire had taken off their ragged coats and were waving them over their heads, and continued to shout like madmen. Lola and Anatole stood together behind them, and with straining eyes looked out over the sea.

The sailor strolled slowly up and said, in a surly voice, to Ivor and Beausire:

"What's the use of makin' that infernal shindy? They won't hear you for a good two hours yet, an' they'll ha' seen us long afore then—that is, if she's comin' this way."

"Of course she's coming this way," said Beausire, in an interval in which he had intended to fetch his breath. He then began to shout and dance about on the rock like a lunatic once more.

For an hour the same performance continued. Ivor and Beausire waved and shouted, and the other three continued to gaze out over the sea.

They had addressed no word to each other, until the sailor suddenly burst out:

"By Heaven, she *is* headin' for us, and she's a man-o'-war, too; but I can't tell English or furriner yet."

Again there was silence for a full half-hour, broken again by the sailor, who muttered:

"A British man-o'-war she is."

Shortly afterward some sort of signal was made from the ship, which to Ivor and Beausire meant that they were seen.

Then they went wild with frenzy. They clasped each other's hands and shook them as though they had not seen each other for twenty years. They danced about the rock and laughed and cried by turns, while Lola and Anatole embraced with tears.

The sailor surveyed the group, and muttered "Fools!" and then spat upon the ground reflectively. He was obviously uneasy in his mind.

When the ship was some quarter of a mile from shore, she dropped her anchor, and a boat put off from her side and made for the shore.

The whole party then left the rock and ran down to a small bay on the beach and waited.

Ivor and Beausire raised a cheer as the tars bent to their oars and made the boat fly through the water. The cheer came back like thunder from eight brazen throats, and Ivor and Beausire laughed like idiots at each other, and shook hands once more.

When the boat was about fifteen yards away, and the officer in the stern had cried "Easy all," Ivor and Beausire dashed into the water and laid hold of her bows, and cheered till they were hoarse.

The honest tars laughed all over their faces and patted them on the back, and swore as tars do.

In two minutes they were all aboard the boat, and her head was put about, and they were rowed to the ship.

"No luggage, gentlemen, I suppose?" said the officer, smiling at Ivor.

Ivor so far forgot his manners as not to answer. His brain was in a whirl which would not allow of any consecutive thought. Very soon they were clambering up the side of the vessel. She was H. M. S. *Amorphous*, on the Australian station, and had come on her regular journey to the Crozet Islands to look out for shipwrecked sailors, and to see that the *cache* was intact.

As soon as they were over the side, a confused babble of questioning arose, which required no answer for the present. They were saved; that was enough.

When the sailor had come over the side, and had saluted the captain from old habit, the boatswain looked hard at him for some moments, and then said, quite loud enough to be heard by the bystanders:

"Well, I'll be blowed!"

The sailor scowled at him fiercely and turned his back.

Ivor, excited though he was, noticed the incident, but it passed out of his mind instantly; but it was recalled to his memory in about three-quarters of an hour's time, when, arrayed in some shore clothes of one of the officers, he came on deck with a cigar in his mouth. He heard a scuffle, and looking forward, saw the sailor who had been wrecked along with them fighting with the boatswain and two other sailors. He was soon overpowered and brought aft, and in a quarter of an hour was in irons.

The boatswain had recognized him as soon as he had come on board. They had served together on board Her Majesty's ship *Ponderous* four years previously, and the sailor, who was then A. B., had deserted while they were lying off Portland. Ivor and Beausire saw nothing more of him. He received his due reward on reaching land, but they now understood his indifference as to whether he was left on the island or not.

Ivor's story did not take long to tell. The captain told him that their ship had been reported as having been lost, with all hands, on the "Twelve Apostles." Several ships had passed close down by them a month or six weeks after they had been more than due, and a quantity of wreckage had been seen which presumably belonged to her, and the stern of a boat had been picked up, bearing her name. Her owners had taken this as conclusive evidence—never dreaming that the ship could have been driven so far out of her course at that particular time of year as to reach the Crozet Islands; he said that he had had no idea that there would be any possibility of finding any one on Hog Island—for his part, he regarded it as absurd to be compelled to go there, even as often as he did. He had only known of one previous shipwreck on the island, and added, as though to himself, that if ship-captains got so far out of their course as that, they deserved to be wrecked, especially when the wind was always fair. He obviously took Ivor's story of the violence of the gale with a very large grain of salt.

For his part, he wouldn't mind being compelled to sail all his life from the Cape to Australia, as then he might get to bed at night, as a blind cat could sail a ship through those waters.

"But we were wrecked, for all that," said Ivor.

"Some people would get wrecked in Plymouth Harbor in a dead calm," answered the captain.

Ivor and Beausire were, at any rate, quite pleased that a beneficent Government had seen fit to make the arrangements which it had done. Those who have never been cut off from intercourse with their fellow-men, whether willingly or unwillingly, can never fully appreciate what Ibsen so often dilates upon—"*la joie de vivre*," the delight of being alive.

Ivor and Beausire were ready to do anything outrageous in their joy, and were a perfect godsend to the officers of the ship, who are apt, at times, to become somewhat tired of one another's society.

Anatole alone of the rescued was not entirely happy.

His wedding had been interrupted—in an entirely pleasant manner, it is true; but now he had no thoughts save for Lola. He would have been content to live forever with her, even on that lonely isle. He thought so, at any rate; but now, in the bustle and excitement of their rescue, the sweet chain of their intercourse had been rudely broken.

In a few hours the ship weighed anchor and steamed away to Inaccessible; she sailed round the island, firing a gun at the north and south ends, but no answer came, save a shriek from the white cloud of gulls and albatrosses which rose in countless thousands from the cliffs, and the mocking echo hurled back from the chasms and crags.

When they had slowly steamed round the entire island, the ship's head was turned, and they went pounding on—Eastward Ho! —over the blue water to Australia.

Ivor, Beausire and Anatole had no difficulty in getting clothes; but it was a different matter with Lola. She had to content herself with the scanty garments she already possessed and some fine Angola rugs of all the hues of the rainbow. A young lieutenant, obviously smitten by her charms, had volunteered to give up his cabin to her and have a hammock slung in the ward-room. It was he who had begged her to accept the Angola rugs, if she could find any use for them. On the following afternoon she appeared clad in garments which, though inadequate, were at least picturesque.

With woman's deftness she had made for herself a skirt of one of the rugs, and a form of vest of another. This, covered by a pilot coat, which she had managed to fit more or less to her figure, produced a piquant effect which suited her beauty.

As soon as she appeared Anatole rushed to her side, and would have embraced her, but Lola haughtily told him not to make a fool of himself before all these men.

Anatole, crestfallen, asked her if she had repented her promise.

"No; but there is no need to be foolish."

"Then I will ask the curé—there is one, I have seen him—to marry us to-day."

Lola shrugged her shoulders and glanced at the young lieutenant who had given up his cabin to her, and who was passing at that moment. He bowed and came up to ask her how she did.

"Thanks to your courtesy, sir, I am very comfortable," answered Lola, unconsciously, in Spanish.

"Your grace is Spanish?" said the lieutenant, in the same language.

"*Si, Señor*," answered Lola, delighted to find at last some one who could speak the language of the angels.

At once they were deep in conversation, very little of which Anatole understood.

He grew uneasy as he noted how handsome and graceful this cursed young Englishman was, and determined to ask the chaplain to marry them out of hand. He dared not leave Lola's side, however, though for full twenty minutes she had not addressed a word to him, and was practicing—with effect—all her arts of coquetry on her new admirer.

At length duty called the young officer away, and Anatole breathed again; but he saw that Lola's thoughts were still of her charming young companion, and she looked but sourly at him.

In the evening Anatole managed to catch the chaplain after mess, and unburdened his mind to him, and asked him to do him the service of marrying him temporarily, according to the Protestant method, until he should be able to be married *en règle* on shore.

The chaplain was much amused at the request, but said he was afraid that he could not carry out Anatole's wishes, that the Protestant ceremony would not be binding on a Roman Catholic, and much to the same effect.

Anatole explained to him that Ivor was in the middle of the ceremony when the ship had appeared, and had postponed the ceremony, as he thought merely temporarily.

The chaplain laughed, and said that Mr. Gwynne must be a very bold man to lightly undertake such a serious matter.

"But if Mr. Gwynne, who is no ecclesiastic, was willing to do it, surely you, monsieur, who are curé, need not have any scruples."

The chaplain muttered something about "fools step in where angels fear to tread," which Anatole did not understand. He thought, however, that it meant that the chaplain was wavering, and would shortly consent to do that which he wished. He redoubled his efforts in consequence, and absolutely overwhelmed the chaplain with arguments in favor of his being married at once. The chaplain at last said:

"My dear sir, it is utterly out of the question, and I have not the remotest intention of doing anything of the sort, and you are merely wasting breath in going on like this. If I were a Roman Catholic I might possibly consider the matter; as it is, I can't think of it for a moment."

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Anatole, catching at a straw, said with a gulp:

"I will turn Protestant, and Lola shall turn with me."

The chaplain smiled as he answered:

"No, no, my good fellow. I can't accept a proselyte on those conditions, and I would not answer so quickly for a lady, who is not yet your wife, if I were you. What you suggest does great credit to your heart, but your head will tell you that what you propose is not to be undertaken lightly. Courage, man," he added in French, "you have not long to wait."

Anatole, seeing that further argument was useless, thanked him, sighed and went away, cursing inwardly that this *sacré* ship had not arrived just a quarter of an hour later, in order that he might have had—what he at least would have considered—a legal right to prevent Lola from flirting with any one.

Ivor, in the course of a few days, had told the captain the general outline of his story, omitting, of coure, all mention of Gwen, and the captain had advised him to fight shy of Western Australia, as he was without capital, and thoroughly concurred with him when Ivor suggested that he should try some of the older workings of Victoria.

"All the new rushes of the last thirty or forty years," said the captain, "have drawn people away from the workings which would have stood years more labor, and would have paid it well, too. I don't understand this gold craze. People never seem to be contented with a moderate certainty. They will go the whole hog."

"And come out poorer than they went in."

"In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, yes. It is the one lucky man who brings all the others in his train. Every man says to his neighbor, 'Just look at So-and-So; went out to South Africa without a penny in his pocket, and now he dosen't know how rich he is;' and they think all the time that Tom, Dick and Harry can and will do exactly the same thing, merely for the trouble of going. No, sir, trusting everything to one blind chance is no work for any but a man who is absolutely on his beam ends, or has tried everything else and failed. Now, you and your friend *are* here, take my advice and don't go for the big thing. It is a thousand to one against you. Blessed is he who expecteth little, for he shall not be disappointed;" with which adaptation of an old saw he left him.

The captain's advice fell in with Ivor's previous intention, and his mind was now fully made up to go on to Melbourne, and thence up the Castlemaine and farther.

The days sped on, and Anatole became annoyed almost beyond endurance at Lola's behavior. She threw him just sufficient crumbs of affection to whet his appetite, and then devoted her attention to flirtation on a grand scale. She did not care with whom she flirted. If the captain was not there to do her homage, she was content with the senior lieutenant or the captain of the marines. If none of the officers were at hand, she would even "keep her hand in" by flirting with the sailors or marines.

Every man in the ship was in love with her. Sailors are notoriously apt to fall in love with anything in petticoats, and when that "anything" happens to be a gloriously beautiful woman, willing—nay, eager—to encourage their attentions, conquest is very easy.

Lola was, for the first time in her life, supremely happy. To be the only woman among a crowd of men, and to be conscious that all those men were her devoted slaves, was a position which she would not have exchanged for any on earth. There was no cloud across her sky. Anatole's sighs and tears were as nothing to her; she held him safe in any case. There was no other woman to draw attention away from herself for the fraction of a second. She was a queen, with that supreme sense of power that no other queen can have. She had her one great opportunity, and took it; she flirted outrageously.

The young lieutenant who had given up his cabin to her was her especial favorite. He could speak Spanish, and she could converse with him at her ease.

Anatole would have loved to challenge him to mortal combat, but he knew that the young officer would refuse to fight a man in his position, and, besides, these dull Englishmen did not fight duels.

Matters came to a climax when the captain saw his junior lieutenant kissing Lola under the shadow of a gun one moonlight night. Although he had fain been himself the offender, he saw that matters had gone far enough, and the following day Lola was astonished to find that officers, soldiers and sailors were courteous and polite, but had no time to talk to her or linger by her side.

She had to content herself with Anatole, whose spirits had recovered slightly, as they were now but three days' sail from port.

Lola, seeing that her reign was over, became once more affectionate with Anatole, and three days after they stepped ashore at Williamstown, pledged to marry on the following day.

CHAPTER XVII.

FIRST GLIMPSE OF AUSTRALIA.

Ivor and Beausire, with Anatole and Lola, went up to Scott's Hotel, where Lola's brother—Juan Martinez—was head waiter. Lola and her brother greeted each other with all the fervor of the South, and their repeated embraces made Anatole wince. Before they had been an hour in the hotel, Ivor and Beausire were besieged with visitors, eager to see the survivors of the shipwreck.

With that generosity which is nearer the surface in Australia than it is in the old country, their visitors subscribed and presented them with some three hundred pounds on the spot, thinking that they had in all probability lost their all in the ship. Ivor would have liked to refuse the money, but Beausire dissuaded him. They kept fifty pounds for their preliminary expenses, and gave the rest to Anatole and Lola as a wedding present. An enterprising music-hall manager offered Ivor and Beausire ten guineas a week each to star the provinces with him—an offer which they declined with thanks.

The story of Anatole and Lola had leaked out, and in consequence, on the following day, the Roman Catholic Chapel in St. Kilda, where they were married, was packed with people to witness the ceremony. As the bride and bridegroom came out of the chapel, one would have thought, to judge by the cheering, that a royal prince, at least, had just been married. Anatole and Lola went away to Mount Macedon for their honeymoon, intending, if possible, to get the management of some hotel or other later on, while Ivor and Beausire, after lingering a few days in Melbourne, went to Castlemaine.

Ivor's first thought on entering Scott's Hotel had been of his letter from Gwen. There were two awaiting him, the latest of them dating seven months back. The first was full of condolence and indignation at his wrongful imprisonment, the second contained merely a few lines, to say that her father was very far from well, and that she should not write again until Ivor's promised second letter should have reached her.

Ivor thought that he detected a certain petulance—or was it indifference?—in the wording of this second letter, and he hesitated for an entire day as to whether he ought to cable to her to assure her of his safety.

He finally decided not to do so. After all, what was he to her? Nothing but a friend. There was no reason why she should take any especial interest in him, except that commonplace, everyday interest which one cannot fail to take in a person with whom one has been brought up. She might be married by now, for aught he knew. Yet the letter he had had from her at the Cape had roused hopes in him which he would not willingly let die.

After all was said and done, he had now no right to think of her in any light save that of a friend, for his resources—small enough when he had left England—had now become infinitesimal, and all he had to live upon was the fare which sustains the majority of the human race—hope.

He and Beausire did not linger long in Castlemaine. They gathered what information they could from casual acquaintances. From all they heard the same tale. Surface-mining in that part of the country was a thing of the past—it had been given up thirty years ago—and as for shaft-mining, with the exception of two or three mines near Fryerstown and one or two at Malmesbury, the reefs had been worked out years ago.

One old man with whom they fell in at the hotel openly laughed at them.

"Look here, my young friends, if there is one man that knows anything about mining in this part of the country, it's me. I made a nice little fortune—nothing to brag about, but still a tidy sum—more than thirty years ago in that very district. It was at the time when two young fellows, just like you, made a fortune—and lost it, too—in the Black Hawk, just to the north of Fryerstown. My claim was at the other end of the town, on the hill, beside the Wesleyan Chapel. You'll see it there now, if you go down that way—the Duke of Cornwall, I called it. I worked it for five years and then sold it, and I have lived on the proceeds ever since. Now, sir, that mine was worked out more than twenty-five years ago. The Black Hawk ruined those two young fellows. What were their names now? Ah, yes; Innes and Reid. I remember young Innes married a very pretty girl down in the Loddon Valley, there—Low was her name. I wonder what has become of them? I believe young Innes came into another fortune. You can see Reid's grave in Fryerstown cemetery now; anyhow, that's not to the point. What I want to say is that those two claims were the only two worth anything at all, and they have both been worked out these twenty-five years and more."

"But I suppose the whole district has not been prospected?" asked Ivor.

"Every inch of it—not once, but a dozen times. I tell you this district is played out. If you want to go gold-mining, Victoria is the worst colony of the lot just now."

"But all the great gold discoveries have been made in places which have been unsuspected of containing gold," said Ivor.

"Tut, tut, man, don't talk like that. I tell you these fields are played out."

"I mean to try them, anyhow," said Ivor, with an air which said as plainly as possible, "and I shall succeed, too."

"Well, well, do as you like, young men. I was just as enthusiastic as you when I was your age, and would have gone gold-mining in a hog-pond, if there had been no other place handy. Experience is everything. I don't know if you have much money to waste or not, but you will lose it all."

Beausire said that they were about as poor as they could be, and the old man interrupted him with:

"Under these circumstances you won't be long before you will be glad to have as much as you have now to pay your passage back to England."

Ivor laughed gayly, and said that he felt sure of success.

"I don't want to throw cold water on youthful enthusiasm, but you will fail, at any rate in this district, and when you have failed, don't you forget old Ezekiel Courtenay—that's my name—a Cornish one. You just come to me. I sha'n't tell you, 'I told you so,' or anything of that sort. Lord bless you, my boys, I have seen hundreds and hundreds like you. I wonder how many of them now have a shirt to their back."

Beausire laughed, and said that Mr. Courtenay ought to go home to England and lecture the intending emigrants, so that they might rot in their own country instead of imposing themselves upon the colonies.

"I suppose you must have your joke, young man, and no one knows better than I do that there is no room in England for more than about two-thirds of the population, and it is quite right that they should leave the country, but what on earth do they all expect to make fortunes for? Every blessed one of them expects to be not only in a better position than he enjoyed in England, but to be in a position of power and authority, to be wealthy simply because they have gone out of one country into another. The thing is absurd. If a plowman who can't make enough to keep body and soul together in England would be content to be a plowman at an excellent wage here, it would be all right; but instead of being a plowman, he wants to be a capitalist and goes fooling round after gold—at least he used to—and will again. Look at the way they rushed like sheep to Broken Hill—look how they are rushing now to Coolgardie. Half a dozen of them, at most, will make money, and the rest will make nothing; and by the very fact of having gone there will have rendered themselves incapable of making money any other way. Once you've had the gold fever, you can settle to nothing else. That comes of belonging to a race who feel it a bounden duty to become rich."

"I am sure we are very much obliged to you for your information, sir," said Ivor. "I don't think I, at any rate, can complain of lacking advice since I left England. On my way to Kimberley, an old gentleman was good enough to give me some excellent advice. He was a Scotchman, and said that success was certain so long as I kept away from whisky."

"Very good advice, too," interrupted Mr. Courtenay.

"But, unfortunately, I had no opportunity of testing it, for I was arrested on a charge of murder as I stepped out of the train, and had no chance of getting any whisky."

Courtenay laughed and said:

"So you didn't find South Africa a success?"

"I never tried it. I was so disgusted with my only experience there that I came away as soon as I was released from prison, and that I owe to my friend here."

Beausire, uncomfortable at the thought of being thanked or praised, said:

"No thanks to me. I drew it about as fine as it was possible."

"So you have had to look death in the face, young man, have you? I congratulate you; that is the best sedative for life that a man can have. I was a harum-scarum sort of a fellow in my young days, but once, when I was buried for a day and a night in a mine down this way, I had a good deal of time to think on things in general, and since those days I think you'll find that no one has anything to say against old Ezekiel Courtenay. Hallo! half-past twelve! I must go to bed. If you are in any difficulty, young fellows, come and look me up, and I'll do my best for you; perhaps, when you are tired of mining, you will want something more solid than good advice, and if your stomachs are not too proud, perhaps I might be able to find that for you, too. Good night; don't hesitate to come to me if you are in trouble."

Ivor and Beausire wished the old gentleman good night, and promised to come to him if they needed advice, and early on the following morning had started up country on their new venture.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 8.]

DARBY, THE BEAR-HUNTER OF ALASKA.*

BY SEWARD W. HOPKINS,

Author of "In the China Sea," "Two Gentlemen of Hawaii," etc.

["DARBY, THE BEAR-HUNTER OF ALASKA" was commenced in No. 47. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the News-dealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MRS. HARBY was so happy over the appearance of the girls at this opportune time that she was almost beside herself in her endeavors to receive them properly in her home.

She led them, half laughing and half crying, into the "best room," and we followed after.

Hadleigh still sat by the fire.

When he heard the unusual commotion he raised his head.

A pallor overspread his face. He stared at the girls. For a moment he seemed to have lost the power of speech.

Then, recovering himself, he rose to his feet, stepped forward, and, stretching out his arms, said:

"Julia! My lost love! Come to me!"

"Come to *you!*" exclaimed Julia.

She stood in a proud and dignified position, and upon her beautiful face there was a look of contempt—of utter loathing.

I looked at Madge. Her face was a counterpart of her sister's.

"Come to *you!*" repeated Julia, her voice trembling with scorn. "*You!* Let me tell you, Charles Hadleigh, that *your* part in the crime that nearly cost our father his life and us our liberty is well known to us."

"It's a lie!" he said, vehemently. "I have done nothing to merit your loathing. I love you. You once loved me. You are bound to me by the wishes of your dead mother. You must become my wife."

"Become your wife! Become the wife of the scoundrel who gave Kirk Morrow and Jim Bryant the plan of our home! Who unlocked the door in the night, that they might enter without any trouble, and whose share was to be one-third of my father's gold, and *me!* Charles, Charles, I did not think you had fallen so low!"

"It's a lie!" he said, hoarsely. "I say it's an infernal lie! You have no proof."

"I have had all the proof I want. During the short time we were in the custody of those evil men we heard them laughing at the way they got the better of you. They benefited by your duplicity; then, when they were inside, they chloroformed you and left you without your reward for infamy. We heard of it more than once."

"It's a lie!" he said again. "You have no proof."

"We *will* have, if Kirk Morrow and Jim Bryant are ever found, as they *must* be, in time. *Then* the whole story of your shameless conduct shall appear."

"Yes," he said, with a sneer. "Kirk Morrow is found now. He is upstairs in this very house—dead."

"Is that true?" asked Julia, turning to Maxom.

"It is," he replied, gravely. "But before he died he gave proof of what you charge."

"That's another infernal lie!" said Hadleigh, glaring at Maxom with baffled hate in his eyes.

"No," said the Bear-Hunter, calmly, "it is no lie. Mr. Harby, the lieutenant and myself were fortunate enough to overhear the conversation between you and Morrow—before you killed him."

Hadleigh sank back in his chair.

"This is a conspiracy!" he gasped. "A shameful combination to fasten a crime upon me. I will confound you all!"

"Enough!" said Mr. Harby. "Do not waste time on him. We all know he is a villain. Leave him to the law. The men of Circle City will take care of him. Now tell us how you escaped from Morrow and Bryant and came into the hands of this good Brogabrond, who has won our everlasting gratitude by bringing you here unharmed."

We sat down, ignoring the presence of Hadleigh, whose head had again dropped into his hands.

Madge sat by my side, her hand resting in mine. Julia stuck close to Maxom, as if feeling the need of his powerful arm to shield her.

"There is not much that I can tell," she said, "for I do not know, really, how it occurred. That is, I do not know how the chief was made aware of the fact that Morrow and Bryant were taking us away against our will."

Maxom smiled, and looked at me significantly.

"Perhaps I can explain that," he said. "But tell us the story of your journeys. We are anxious to hear it all."

"Yes," said Mrs. Harby. "Do relate your experiences. They must have been terrible."

"No," said Julia. "We have had no terrible experiences. Our minds suffered—not our bodies. But I will tell you all about it. On that awful night in Circle City, which shall always be a bitter memory for us, we were both awakened by hearing some one in our room. Almost at the same instant, Madge and I sat up in bed, and there we saw a man who wore a mask. We screamed for help, and then another man came, and cursed us and gagged us with towels. We screamed twice, I think, and we saw papa, but the men attacked him and we saw him struck down with a knife. We were powerless to aid ourselves or to call out. We were

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then taken from the house and carried some distance out of Circle City to a hut that was apparently unused. It was an old hut, perhaps the home of some Indian family long ago. Here they left us, first binding us tightly to prevent our escape. They were gone some time. When they returned they took us again, carrying us like babies, and after a difficult walk brought us to the river bank where there was a boat moored. In the boat was father's box of gold. We knew then that while they were away from us they were carrying the gold down to the boat.

"It was not a rowboat they had, but a little steam launch. They set out at once, down the river, and knowing that we could not escape they released us from our thongs. We pleaded with them and begged them to set us on shore, but to all our entreaties they turned a deaf ear.

"We fancied the boat must have been stolen, or at least newly acquired, for neither of them seemed to know how to manage it. They were sending it along at the highest rate of speed they could get, and ran upon a rock. Oh, how they cursed! They headed the boat, which leaked badly, toward the shore, and reached it only in time to prevent our sinking.

"We left the boat and wandered some time over the snow-covered ground, and the two villains seemed to be lost. But we happened to come upon Brogabrond, and they purchased a sled and team of reindeer from him for a handful of father's gold. They did not know the chief's language, nor he theirs, so they used signs in talking. These served well enough to let him know what they wanted, and we were soon on the way again, flying over the snow after the team of reindeer.

"At one time we narrowly escaped being devoured by wolves. But the beasts were not near enough as we passed to catch up with us, though Morrow kept shooting at them until they were left too far behind.

"Then we saw you coming. Instinctively we knew you, even before you were near enough to be recognized. The fact that the approaching team was trying to catch us was enough. How our hearts beat, and how we prayed that your reindeer might be sustained until they reached us. Rescue seemed very near, when suddenly Morrow raised his rifle and fired, and we saw one of your reindeer fall. Our captors gave a laugh of triumph, and we were soon so far on our way that we could not see you.

"Shortly after that a great snowstorm came on, and we could not see where we were going. It was impossible for the men to guide the team, for they could see nothing. So they allowed the animals to pick their own way, urging them to speed, hoping they would, by their own instincts, find shelter. And they did. They carried us right into the arms of their former owner, Brogabrond, though he and his men were not encamped in the same spot where we saw them before.

"Brogabrond seemed pleased to see us. Of course, nothing was said that we could understand. Brogabrond would talk to his Indians and point to us, and then to the men.

"The reindeer were taken away, and the Indians led Madge and me to a tent. Here we had shelter and food, and the Indians attended upon our wants with a kindness that surprised us. But what surprised us more was that we saw no more of Morrow and Bryant. Not a sign of them did we see after that, and of course we could not ask any questions of the Indians to find out what had become of them. We did not dare try asking by signs for fear the Indians would think we wanted the scoundrels and send them to us.

"The Indians broke camp after the storm, and we moved slowly across the country, the Indians appearing to be very busy looking after their reindeer, of which they had a great number. Madge and I rode in a sled, with the chief for a driver, and no one could have been more careful of our welfare.

"Yesterday we arrived at an Indian village on this river, and early this morning we started down in the boats. By that time Brogabrond managed to make us understand that he was taking us to our friends, and you can imagine the condition of our hearts and nerves when we saw the crowd waiting for us here. But it is over now, and thank God for Brogabrond and his timely assistance."

"Amen," said Mr. Harby.

"Now I'll get Brogabrond's side of it, and then we will have the story complete," said Maxom.

He and the Rat chief now engaged in an animated conversation in the Indian's tongue, during which Mr. Harby, Maxom and Tahnag laughed frequently.

"Brogabrond says," said Maxom, "that he knew as soon as you returned to him in the storm that you were the girls we were after. It was Brogabrond that furnished us our reindeer outfit, and I told him who you were and what kind of men Morrow and Bryant were. The Indian's stern sense of justice was aroused, and he seized the opportunity to show his friendship for me by assisting you. He says that he took the arms and ammunition away from Morrow and Bryant, and turned them adrift in the snow, having a good half dozen of his Indians help them on their way with kicks and blows. Morrow reached here. Bryant, no doubt, is out somewhere in the snow, dead. Stern justice—but *justice*."

"A remarkable chain of events," said Mr. Harby. "God's hand is clearly seen through it all. His mercy is above all else. We cannot honor His name beyond its merits."

"True," said Mrs. Harby. "You have, dear girls, been saved from an awful fate."

"And what now, Maxom?" I said. "There still remains part of our errand unaccomplished."

"Yes—the Kowaks. I think we can attend to that. It is much more than a day's trip on the river to Circle City. I think the best thing we can do is to take one of these large boats of the Rats and build a sort of cabin on it, so that the girls may have a place to themselves during the trip. The Chilcoots can row it, and we can pull old *Te-tsun* through the water ourselves."

"Good!" I said. "And don't forget the clothes."

"What clothes?" asked Madge.

I laughed, and, walking out to the *Te-tsum*, brought in the pack of clothing Hadleigh had taken from the house in Circle City.

"How thoughtful you were," said Julia. "How can we ever thank you for all this effort in our behalf?"

"I guess you will succeed in giving them all the thanks they want," said Mr. Harby, his eyes twinkling with amusement. "I *think* you will."

The girls blushed, and Mrs. Harby hustled them out of the room into another, where they could examine the clothing we had brought and make a change of garments if they chose.

"My idea is," said Maxom, "to send Tahnag up to the Kowak country to investigate. I feel secure in trusting him with the duty, for I am confident that with the defeat of the Tananahs, the source of danger to the Kowaks is destroyed. Tahnag can take a force from here, and with a few teams of reindeer run up to the first Kowak villages, the location of which he knows well, and can return with the information as to the true condition of things by the time we get the big boat ready for the girls to start home in."

So Tahnag was started off with twenty picked Indians, and he fulfilled his mission to the satisfaction of ourselves, Governor Sheakley and the Kowaks. Everything was quiet in the Kowak villages, and it had become known that the enemies who had been destroying the happiness of the northern Indians were the bloodthirsty Tananahs. The small party of Tananahs which Mesouga had mentioned as being in the vicinity of the Kowaks after girls for wives for Tananah warriors, had been attacked and destroyed by the Kowaks themselves, aided by a hunting party of Kutchins, who had come that way, and who furnished the necessary pluck and courage for the occasion.

Shortly after Tahnag had set out, we saw all that was left of Mesouga's once powerful band going down the river in their recovered boats. It was a silent return. There were no songs of victory. No shouts. No war paint. They kept far out into the river, as if not wishing to come under the observation of the people at the fort. This was the last wild raid of the Tananahs. They were severely punished, and their lesson was enough.

We began work on the boat at once, and several of the fur-hunters helped us.

The room we had in Mr. Harby's house was given up to the girls, and Hadleigh, Maxom and I accepted the hospitality of some of the fur-hunters on the point.

That night came very near being Maxom's last.

It was early in the morning when I was aroused by the gruff voice of one of the traders.

"Suthin' is wrong out yonder," he said. "Best come and take a look."

Hastily seizing my rifle, I followed him.

At some distance from the log-huts, in a spot not easily seen from the settlement, I found Maxom, conscious, but severely wounded, lying on the snow. Near him lay Charles Hadleigh and the Siberian Yippo. Hadleigh was dead. So was the hound. The dog's great teeth were even now deep in Hadleigh's throat, and Hadleigh's knife was sticking between the ribs of the dog.

I helped Maxom to the nearest house, and found that his wounds, though serious, were not dangerous. When he was recovered sufficiently to talk, I got this story out of him:

Hadleigh had come to him and whispered that Jim Bryant was outside, and that I was awaiting Maxom before taking the man prisoner.

Not suspecting treachery, Maxom hurried out with Hadleigh, and when away from the houses, the rascal sprang upon him from behind and stabbed him. Yippo came to his master's assistance, and a desperate fight between the assassin and the dog took place. Hadleigh's knife was repeatedly plunged into the dog, but the brave animal, faithful unto death, had, in his own death-throes, fastened himself on Hadleigh's throat, and the two lives went out together.

Mr. Harby was called, and Maxom was taken into his house, where he had the tender nursing of three gentle, loving women, under whose care any man, not mortally wounded, would rapidly recover. And this, aided by his rugged constitution, Maxom at once began to do.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 7.]

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—It is said that carbolic acid, if dissolved in glycerine or alcohol, is not caustic, whatever be the degree of concentration. A small proportion of water added to the alcohol or glycerine solution will cause it to act as a caustic.

WILLFUL PENELOPE.*

BY EFFIE ADELAIDE ROWLANDS,

Author of "A Conqueror of Fate," "Little Kit," "At a Great Cost."

["WILLFUL PENELOPE" was commenced in No. 48. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

CHAPTER XXIII.

DENIS LATIMAR in days gone by had regarded Mrs. Rochdale with a certain amount of harshness if not with contempt. He little knew then how gladly he would learn to welcome the very worldliness he so much despised.

Marcia had received the news of Penelope's last undertaking with a sneer, of course; but when her mother spoke of Lady Susan's visit to Thicket Croft, her face had flushed a little.

They were sitting at luncheon when Mrs. Rochdale imparted this news, and his wife's eagle eyes immediately detected the color that came into Denis's face as the subject was introduced.

"I was given to understand Lady Susan regarded herself as an invalid, and could not undertake any visiting," she said, in her most disagreeable way. "At least that was the reason she gave for refusing my invitation here; but perhaps, Denis, you can explain this matter?"

Denis looked at her for an instant in silence.

"Lady Susan called on Miss Desborough at my request, if that is what you mean, Marcia," he said quietly, but very coldly.

"Of course, and why not?" said Mrs. Rochdale, rushing hurriedly to the rescue. "I think it was very kind of you, Denis, to remember Penelope—a girl cannot have too many friends. Was it not good of Denis to interest himself for your cousin, Marcia?"

Marcia looked for an instant at her husband's face, which was bent over his plate.

"Very good," she answered, and her voice was absolutely quiet. But somehow—how he could not have explained—Denis felt a thrill of discomfort in the sound, discomfort that seemed to hang in some way about Penelope. He knew Marcia's jealous nature, however, and he dismissed the feeling immediately, as meaning only the usual anger and folly.

If he could only have known how much it really meant!

Although Marcia Latimar was now regarded as something more than convalescent, she was by no means restored to her former health and strength, and both Doctor Westall—who attended her at Denis's express wish—and her husband, together with her mother, were concerned at the weakness which still hung about her.

A journey south had, of course, been recommended by Doctor Westall; but nothing would induce Marcia to listen to this plan.

"I am all right," she said over and over again to Denis, when he urged her to let him make arrangements for a speedy departure. "I hate the Riviera, and I am getting better every day. I shall certainly not go abroad this winter, at all events."

"But—" Denis would begin, and then stop abruptly; for when Marcia flashed that sharp look at him from under her heavy eyelids, and pinched in her pale lips, he knew he might as well have tried to move a rock from its base as persuade her against some sullen and, to him, incomprehensible reason that had formed itself in her mind.

To Doctor Westall, when he spoke of the necessity of this change, Marcia was only a little more rude than usual. She hated Doctor Westall, and in return she received a full measure of dislike and contempt from Penelope's old friend. Mingling with these feelings in Doctor Westall's mind, however, there was some pity, too—the sort of pity one bestows on some hapless creature whose senses are distorted and whose mental structure is all wrong.

Doctor Westall was one of the few who knew the real, absolute truth about the Latimar household. The gossip that was spread about was more or less unreliable, and naturally there was not wanting the usual amount of exaggeration; but Doctor Westall knew all, and perhaps more. Many and many a time the old doctor would ponder on the miserable mistake Denis had made as he rode home through the village, which was never the same thing to him now that gentle Marian was gone and Penelope's beauty was not there to laugh a greeting at him from the old garden gate.

Marcia's condition, mentally and bodily, was a matter of considerable thought and not a little trouble to Doctor Westall. Symptoms had shown themselves during the past weeks which were ominous to the keen-eyed medical man, so far as the future of the Latimars was concerned. Happiness, he felt rather than knew, Denis Latimar had ceased to expect in his married life; but he might and did reasonably hope for a certain amount of peace as the years rolled on. Now it was just this peace that Doctor Westall felt convinced, the more he saw of Marcia, her husband could never hope to obtain. He had watched and analyzed, as it were, Marcia's nature; and the more he examined into her mental constitution the more he was distressed and grieved.

The moods of wild passion and unreasoning jealousy which were so trying and irritating to Denis, and so incomprehensible to Mrs. Rochdale, were pretty clear to Doctor Westall. He had seen Marcia often in one of these fits of rage, and the sight had sent him away more troubled and more thoughtful.

However, he kept his thoughts to himself, for a time at least, and he determined he would continue to do so till future events should decide whether his mental diagnosis of Marcia's case was correct or not. He made a final attempt to persuade Marcia to do what was wise.

"I am very sorry you have given up all idea of going abroad, Mrs. Latimar," he said, as he was calling one very bitter February day, when the earth seemed nipped and shrunken by the force of the icy east wind that howled and shrieked through the leafless trees. "You really require a thorough change."

Macia, lying back listlessly in her chair by the fire, only shrugged her shoulders. She was very thin and very pale, but she would have been handsome still had her eyes not been full of such restless expression, and her lips pinched and drawn as the lips of one who is oppressed night and day by some ceaseless trouble and care. It was the face of a most unhappy woman, and yet Doctor Westall could not help glancing about him at the exquisite appointments and luxury of the room, at the gown Marcia wore, trimmed about the throat with almost priceless lace, the diamonds flashing on her thin, restless hands, that must have cost an enormous sum.

The old doctor's broad mind and good nature and good heart were stirred within him by the sight of the young woman's face that should have been so bright, so full of all the pleasure and sunshine of youth, instead of wearing such a look as was never absent from her night and day.

Doctor Westall was a man of quick action.

"Mrs. Latimar," he said, speaking out in his sharp, abrupt fashion, "you are doing very wrong. You know as well as I do that this journey I have been prescribing all this time is the one thing that can do you the good you need to set you up with all your old vigor and strength. Doctors are privileged persons, you know. Now, will you be very frank with me, and tell me what earthly reason you have for desiring to cut your own throat in this most obstinate fashion?"

Marcia lifted her eyes and looked at him.

"Because I choose," she answered curtly.

She was invariably rude to Doctor Westall. She knew of his affection for Penelope. That in itself would have been enough to turn her against him, but apart from this fact, Marcia felt that Doctor Westall regarded her with the most supreme contempt, that he only came to see her because of his friendship for Denis, and she, consequently, decided, in her own violent fashion, that she hated this old doctor with his straightforward speech and his keen eyes.

"A very good reason, no doubt, so far as you are concerned," Doctor Westall said, gravely; "but scarcely a sufficient one to satisfy me or your husband."

"It is the only one you will get, nevertheless, so you had better make it do," returned Marcia, with a faint, disagreeable smile, and she set her lips more firmly.

She had her own translation, of course, for the real anxiety and desire Denis expressed for this trip south.

"He wants to get me planted there, and then he will tear back to England and go to her;" that was what she said to herself with that swift, prolific way all jealous natures have of suggesting a possibility, and then she would set her jaw and clench her hands; "but I won't leave him—I won't. He is mine; he belongs to me. He made me his wife, and I shall stick to him all my lifelong. He need not try to deceive me with his kindness and anxiety, as if I did not understand it and see through it all."

With such a thought burning into her brain it can easily be seen that Doctor Westall could do nothing to move her.

He spoke out a few unpleasant truths to Marcia about her health, and the absolute consequence that would follow on her stubborn opposition to his advice, and when he left her he was in a fairly bad temper.

Mrs. Rochdale was waiting to catch him as he left the house.

"I hope you have succeeded," she began, for she had known of his determination to speak.

"I have done nothing of the sort," Doctor Westall answered, with a growl. "Your daughter, Mrs. Rochdale, is not only a very wrong-headed young person, but an exceedingly rude one into the bargain. However, I have done with her. I have tried my best, and now I shall wash my hands of her. She

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can 'gang her own gait' in future, and a sorry one she will find it."

Mrs. Rochdale broke into tears. The good that was in her had worked its way of late through the crust of her selfishness and worldliness.

She was a mother and she was a woman. She would have been less than natural had she stood by complacently while she saw her child going headlong to her own destruction and had shut her eyes to the misery and unhappiness that was Denis Latimar's daily portion.

"And I can do nothing—nothing!" she said brokenly. "That is the worst of all. I had hoped so much Marcia would have grown better as she grew stronger. I put down so much that happened before to her condition, but now there is no reason. She is very, very difficult, Doctor Westall; and sometimes, I assure you, when I try to advise her, she gets in such a fury she is almost as if she were not in her right mind."

Doctor Westall made no answer to this last remark. He said a few soothing words to Mrs. Rochdale, whose distress brought her nearer to his esteem than he could ever have thought it possible, and then he went his way. His face was clouded as he was driven down the avenue, and his thoughts were heavy.

"God help him!" he said to himself. "Whatever folly, whatever mistake Denis has made in this matter, his punishment has come, and, unless I am very much mistaken, more is at hand."

And then Doctor Westall's thoughts turned, as they were wont to do, on Penelope, and he took out of his pocket a letter he had just received from her, in which she simply insisted on his going to her for a visit without delay, threatening all sorts of dire vengeance if he dared to disobey.

"You can manage it if you like—and you must like," Penelope wrote. "Fancy, I have been nearly a month here, and you have never been to see me once. It is a very short journey. In fact, I was considerably surprised, on looking out your trains, to find that Stevenstone is just on the borders of my county. So we are neighbors, after all, and I shall expect you to regard Thicket Croft as your second home."

Penelope had, indeed, been not only surprised but a good deal distressed to find that her new home was so close to her old one. She had not given the county a thought when she determined to take up her abode at Thicket Croft. It was true that a goodly number of miles stretched between her and Stevenstone, but that this distance could be encompassed sometimes Penelope had already learned through some of her new acquaintances, who spoke of the Latimar hounds having an occasional finish in some one of the spots round about Thicket Croft, and of the excitement attendant on such occasions.

Penelope, with an uneasy pain at her heart, could only hope devoutly that such a thing might not happen this winter, or, if it did, that she might be safely out of the way at the time, and so avoid all discomfort.

From her aunt she heard that Denis and his wife were not going abroad. Penelope felt a vague thrill of pleasure and regret at this intelligence. It was always a source of joy to her to know that she was near to him; that they breathed the same air and lived in the same country. And yet, paradoxically, she desired that they should not do this; that they should be separated one from the other by illimitable space—a distance so great that the yearning desire, the anguish of her love could not even pass it.

It was somewhat of a blow to her to realize that they were so close now; but after the first feeling of pain and fear, Penelope grew reconciled to the thought. She had put him so absolutely to the test—a year had more than rolled its weary length away, and yet, except for what she learned from others, Denis Latimar might have been a dead man to her.

Since that ever-remembered day in the old garden, not by sign, not by written word or by any deed had Denis endeavored to hold any communication with her. He had obeyed her absolutely.

"We must never meet again—never!—never!"

That is what she had said; and he had recognized the right of her determination and respected her decree. If Penelope yearned sometimes to see him, to have a word in his handwriting, to realize his absolute existence, there always came the memory of Denis's submission to her wish, of his unbounded respect, of his devotion. All this appealed as it would appeal to any high-minded woman; but oh! it was very hard sometimes to feel that no matter what he suffered, no matter what sorrow might shadow his life, she alone, out of all the world, must be silent, must never speak comfort or offer consolation.

She did not often let these sorrowful reflections have prominence in her daily life. Penelope had learned many little things during her year's sojourn under her uncle's roof—patience and self-restraint and a determination to attain as much philosophy as was compatible with her nature. She was so sunny at heart that even her sorrow and her longing could not cloud her life altogether; and there had been no sound so sweet to Hartwick Desborough as the music of Penelope's young laughter ringing out now and then through his gloomy house. She was indeed to him a veritable sunbeam.

It was not long before Lady Susan learned to regard the girl very much in the same light. Penelope's sense of humor was generally the first thing that touched a congenial and sympathetic nature. Her healthy young beauty would have won her friends by the dozen; but it needed some one tuned just in her key to thoroughly grasp and understand the girl's full charm; and this is what Lady Susan Verschoyle speedily did.

They became fast friends, this old, white-haired woman and this beautiful girl. The county gentry were slightly jealous of Lady Susan's evident partiality for Miss Desborough; but after a while it became a recognized fact, and by degrees Penelope was spared the infliction of many visits. It came to be understood that Miss Desborough went nowhere except to Lady Susan Verschoyle, and, consequently, it was also generally understood there was nothing to be gained by seeking her society.

This was just what the girl most desired. Life for her now was exceedingly pleasant. Cheered by the friendship of a woman whom she had grown to love as well as admire, with the knowledge of her old friends still devoted and stanch, a beautiful home, served by dependants who adored her, there was nothing but the remembrance of Denis and the knowledge of her sister's absence to cloud the brightness of her lot. The memory of her beloved mother had become less of a grief now, though Penelope never ceased to regret that her present good fortune could not have been shared by that sweet mother.

So in her bright, cheerful way, doing all the good that was possible to her, and winning for herself a name in the poor part of the neighborhood around which was synonymous with affection and gratitude, our pretty little Penelope found herself set fairly on a road of life which, if it lacked the one geat beauty, the one great treasure she desired, was yet full of pleasures, of small joys, of a content which was not to be measured by words.

She had settled down in a wonderfully short space into her new position, and before she had been mistress of Thicket Croft more than six weeks it seemed to her as though she could read her future life absolutely.

It would be the same story month after month—a quiet, uneventful, contented existence, which would last on till the blue of her eyes was dimmed and her dark hair sprinkled with silver.

And even while Penelope thought this in a dreamy, not dissatisfied way, events were drawing themselves together in her path, and danger was looming ominously in the distance.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"I have some news for you, my dear," Lady Susan said one day, as Penelope entered her cozy boudoir and bent to kiss her. The young mistress of Thicket Croft had ridden over to luncheon—a jaunt she performed on an average three or four times a week. "I do not think you will guess it, so I will not put you to the test."

"I know what it is," Penelope laughed, as she warmed her hands by the fire. "Nuttie's new coat has arrived from town."

Lady Susan shook her head with a laugh.

Nuttie was an old pug of large, not to say fat, proportions, who slumbered audibly in a luxurious basket.

"Then you have decided to sell Polly at last," was Penelope's next guess.

Polly was a gray parrot who said very rude things sometimes, but who was much beloved of his mistress, and therefore the question of his rudeness was often overlooked.

Lady Susan shook her head a second time.

"Polly will pay you out for that remark," she said, quietly. "Try again."

Penelope unpinned her veil from her lovely, glowing face and took off her hat.

"My imagination absolutely fails me," she laughed. "The wind is so cold to-day, I am frozen entirely. I feel a very stupid person, Lady Sue!"

Lady Susan smiled.

"Ah, I knew you would never guess this news. I accept your very feeble excuse, but I am not convinced that it is altogether the fault of the cold wind; but when one really is stupid—well, one excuse is as good as another." And then Lady Susan produced a letter, and handed it to the girl. "My dear," she said, "there is my wonderful news; it certainly gave me a surprise, although there is nothing very startling in it, after all—it is a very ordinary matter."

Penelope took the letter, and then turned a little aside as she began to read it. Her quick eyes had caught the printed address on the top of the page, and the big eagle with the two stars, which was the well-known crest of the Latimar family. The letter was from Marcia, and was not very long. Penelope read:

"DEAR LADY SUSAN: I am wondering if you will have thought me very rude not to have acknowledged before this the most kind letter you wrote me at the time of my illness. I sincerely hope you will forgive my seeming neglect. I was much touched by your kindness, and have often wished I might have had the opportunity of thanking you in person for your thought of me. I have, as I daresay you have heard, been more or less of an invalid these past weeks; but I am now almost quite recovered, and hope to be perfectly well before long. I am about to make a suggestion to you which I trust will not be disagreeable to you. Next week Denis and I have promised to be present at the ——shire hunt ball, which is to be held at Mr. Grantham's house, a near neighbor of yours, I am told. Will you think us too tiresome if I ask you to take us in for this occasion? Please do not hesitate to be frank with me, and to refuse if our visit should be in the least inconvenient. We can, of course, go to an inn—there is sure to be something of the sort near; but I have no doubt you will not allow this, for I remember your most kind invitation when I last saw you, and it is this remembrance that has prompted me to suggest inflicting ourselves upon you now. Denis is out hunting, or he would, I know, send you his love, and with kindest regards, and a sincere desire that I may not be making myself a nuisance, I am, dear Lady Susan, yours most truly,

"MARCIA R. LATIMAR."

"There is but one answer to the letter," said Lady Susan, as Penelope read on to the end. "I have written already to Mrs. Latimar, and I have given Shorten all directions to prepare for the arrival of my guests on Monday. They will stay a week, I expect, and I shall look to you, Penelope, to come over and help me to amuse them!"

Penelope did not answer at once. She looked as if she felt a little troubled and a little perplexed.

This was something quite unexpected, and, moreover, there was an element in it that hurt her and gave a sense of annoyance.

"I wonder Marcia did not offer to come to me," she said, thinking her thoughts aloud. "It is funny she should not have done so, for my house is, at least, half way nearer to the Granthams than yours; but I suppose—" and then Penelope stopped abruptly.

"But what, my dear?" asked Lady Susan, gently.

"I suppose I must really recognize the fact that my cousin does not want me. It is, after all, not very surprising," Penelope said, quickly, "for we know so little of each other; we have never been together as other cousins so frequently are, and our lives do not run in the same groove; still—"

Still, Penelope could not help being hurt and disquieted by Marcia's manner toward herself. Although they had never been close companions, they had parted with a semblance of interest and friendship, and except that Marcia might be harboring lingering feelings of vexation because Penelope had refused to be bridesmaid at her wedding, Penelope could absolutely see no reason why her cousin should treat her so strangely and ignore her very existence.

She realized many little things in this moment of thought that had escaped her before. She remembered now that Marcia had never written to her once since her marriage, had never once invited her to Latimar Court, had never once sought to show that there was the smallest interest between herself and Penelope Desborough.

Shrinking from the mere thought of a sojourn under Denis's roof, never even having indeed the faintest shadow of such an idea in her mind at any time, Penelope had allowed Marcia's neglect to pass unnoticed; but now all these things came to her, and she was forced to admit to herself, as this last instance of Marcia's intention to ignore her was realized, that Mrs. Latimar had either some cause for anger against her or that she simply did not intend to trouble herself, one way or another, about so unimportant a person.

The latter view of the case was, after all, the more likely, Penelope soon determined; and though, of course, it hurt her a little at first, it was, on taking everything into consideration, perhaps the best and wisest thing that could have happened.

The more she thought the more Penelope realized this. Since Marcia ignored her so openly, she in her turn was not called upon to make any public recognition of her cousin, and so she would be spared some hours of bitter pain—pain that would and must be inevitable in the event of a meeting between Denis and herself.

Lady Susan, looking at the girl before her, thought to herself she had very little difficulty in understanding Mrs. Latimar's treatment of her cousin—Lady Susan had taken a very speedy and shrewd measure of Marcia's nature and character, and she knew a little more of the world than Penelope. Moreover, even if there had not been a question of her cousin's immense superiority in beauty, and, indeed, in everything else, Lady Susan would have easily understood the reason that prompted Marcia to choose to stay at her house for this hunt ball instead of seeking Penelope's hospitality. Marcia, for all the pride of her present position, was an utter snob, and would act and think as a snob to the end of her days.

"I don't think you need trouble yourself very much about her. Mrs. Latimar honors me because it suits her purpose to do so; once this visit is over I shall sink into oblivion again, no doubt; but I hope I shall survive that and much more. Come to luncheon, Penelope, and tell me all your news."

They chatted away merrily through luncheon, but Lady Susan's quick sympathy had noted at once that there was a shadow across her sunbeam, and that Penelope made an effort to exert herself where usually she had no need to make any.

But the old lady never fathomed for a single instant the real cause for this shadow, and Penelope was only too content to let her think she was troubled by Marcia and by Marcia alone.

"If you do not see much of me next week," she said, as she rose to take her departure an hour or so later, "you will not think it is neglect on my part or forgetfulness, will you, dear Lady Sue?"

In answer Lady Susan drew her down and kissed her tenderly.

"Such things are unknown to my little Pen," she said, with much love in her voice. "My dear, you know I know you, so why do you ask me such a question? I am sorry you have not decided to stay with me to-day, Pen; it feels to me like snow in the air; be sure and ride home quickly. Oh, of course, I remember, you have got your old doctor coming to see you to-day. I believe I am jealous of your doctor, Pen."

"You are both two silly persons," Penelope cried, with her own inimitable impertinence, "for Doctor Westall pretends he is jealous of you. Now I must be off. Yes, I will take every care of myself, and you will see me to-morrow with my doctor. He has promised me to stay till to-morrow evening; but it is an immense concession, I assure you, and I have had much difficulty in getting him here at all."

Despite the emotions roused naturally about the news Lady Susan had given her, Penelope managed to spend a very happy evening with her old friend. It was such a pleasure taking him all over her possessions.

"See, Uncle George, these are your apartments—I shall keep them always for you; and this is the room I am going to give Madge next week."

For Miss Riley had sent a hurried scrawl to Penelope, which Doctor Westall had delivered, asking for hospitality for herself and her married sister, for the ——shire hunt ball.

Penelope's answer had been sent, and was, needless to say, a delighted acquiescence.

It was not till they were seated at dinner that Penelope spoke of the Latimars. Ignorant that the doctor had guessed a great deal of the truth back in the old days, she felt it was proper in her to speak of such a subject of mutual interest.

Doctor Westall laughed grimly at mention of Marcia's name.

"Don't inquire anything of me," he said, in his shortest way. "I have had the Latimar gates shut in my face."

Penelope uttered a broken exclamation.

"Not Denis?" she faltered.

"Denis!" cried the doctor. "No, no, my little Pen. Denis Latimar is what he always was—one of the best young fellows in the world; not Denis, no, indeed!" Doctor Westall sipped his wine. "I ventured to tell Mrs. Latimar she was going the right way to kill herself, and she has dispensed with my services, Pen, that's all."

Penelope was silent a moment.

"Is—is she then very delicate?" she asked, when she spoke.

"With care, Mrs. Latimar might and could be as strong as any one could desire to be; but she wants great care. She has no right to be here now. I ordered her south weeks ago. Her lungs are by no means in a satisfactory condition. She needs complete change—healing air, sunshine—not only to restore her strength, but to soothe her brain, which is in anything but a healthy condition. Three or four months abroad in some corner of Italy would do wonders for her; but"—Doctor Westall shook his head—"she ought not to put her nose out of doors in this English spring weather. The consequences cannot but be bad."

"Then the going to this ——shire ball does not meet with your approval, Uncle George?"

Doctor Westall put down the glass he was lifting to his lips and frowned.

"Is this certain?" he asked, sharply.

Penelope gave him the news as she had received it from Lady Susan.

"Marcia writes she is quite strong," she finished.

Doctor Westall paused a moment.

"Denis knew nothing of this two days ago, I'll swear, for I met him in the village, and we had a short chat about her."

"Perhaps she thinks it is due to her position," Penelope suggested.

Doctor Westall snorted.

"She has got one of her evil cranks in her head. Ah! I see it now. Some one has told her Madge Riley is going. Perhaps Denis, poor chap, may have said he ought to show up at the affair, and there you are."

Penelope was shocked, and felt very miserable.

"And Madge is coming here!" she said, in a low voice. "Oh, Uncle George!"

"And why should you not have your friends here, I should like to know?" flared the doctor. "Must you consult that young virago for all you do? I tell you what it is, Pen: I shall come for this ball, too. It's a long time since I tripped the light fantastic toe, but I daresay I shall be all right when I get there. I'll have my red coat furbished up, and I'll dance with the best of them!"

Penelope smiled at this, but somehow her enjoyment was spoiled. Try as she would to push aside the feeling, she had an uneasy sensation that something unpleasant was going to happen, and it did not give her much comfort when she realized, as she did later on, that her old friend had the same feeling, and that he looked, as no doubt he felt, troubled and slightly anxious.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 8.]

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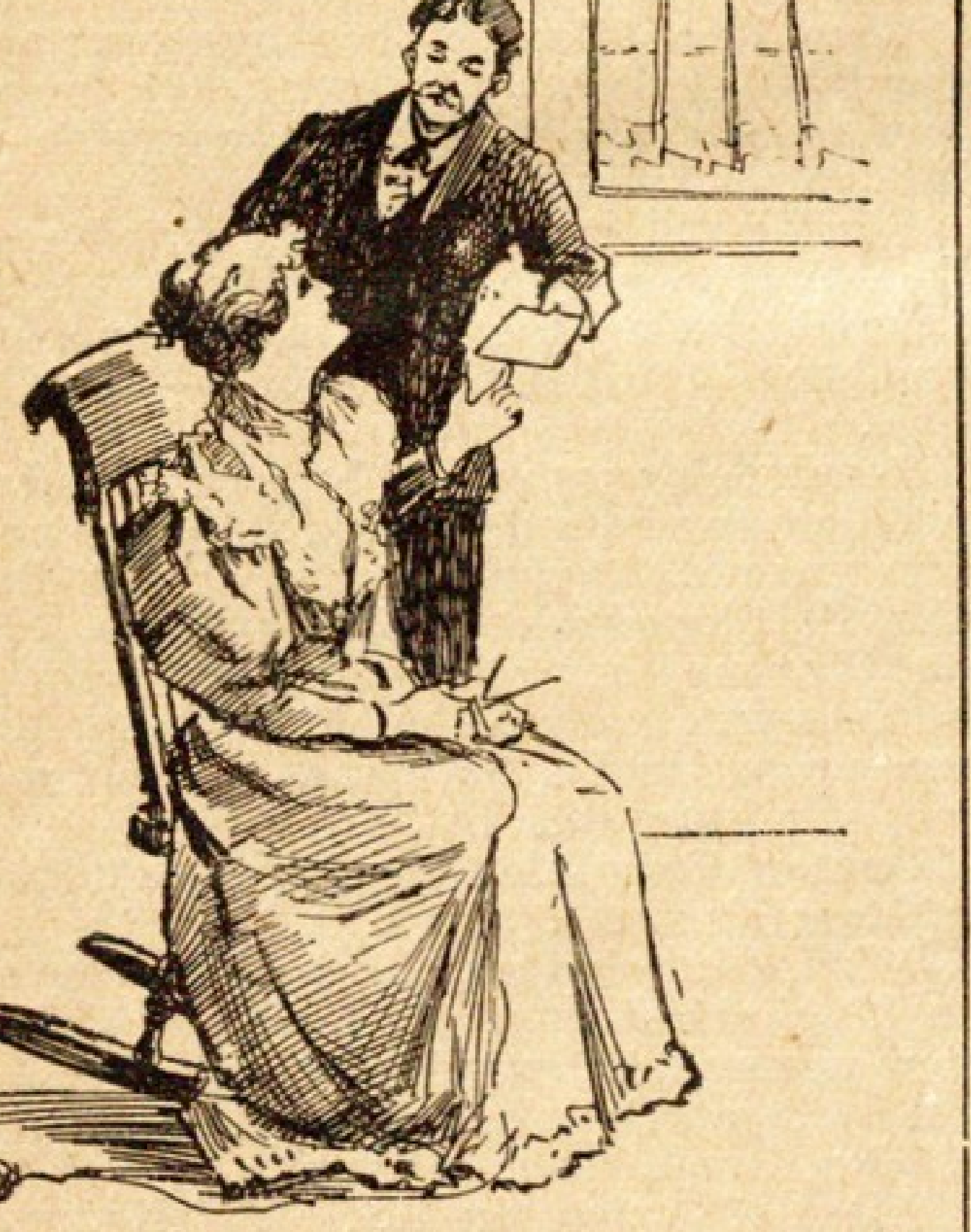
Miss Jemima's Valentine.[*]

BY RUTH McENERY STUART.

CHAPTER I.

Two crimson spots appeared upon Miss Jemima's pale face when she heard the gate-latch click. She knew that her brother was bringing in the mail, and, as he entered the room, she bent lower over her work, her crochet-needle flew faster and she coughed a slight cough. But she did not look up.

She knew, without looking, that her brother brought in a pile of valentines in his hand, and that when presently he should have finished distributing them to his eager sons and daughters, her nephews and nieces, he would come and bring one to her—or else? He would not do this last. It was this dread that brought the crimson spots to her cheeks.



"THIS LOOKS MIGHTY SUSPICIOUS, SIS MIMIE."

If there was one for her he would presently come, and, leaning over her shoulder, he would say, as he dropped upon her lap the larger, handsomer one than all the others: "This looks mighty suspicious, Sis' 'Mimie," or, "We'll have to find out about this," or maybe, as he presented it, he would covertly shield her by addressing himself to the younger crowd after this fashion:

"Ef I had a lot o' boys and girls, an' couldn't get a bigger valentine from all my sweethearts an' beaux than my ol' auntie can set still at home an' git, why, I'd quit tryin'—that's what I would."

There was always a tenderness in the brother's manner when he handed his sister her valentine. He had brought her one each year for seven years, now, and after the first time, when he had seen the look of pain and confusion that had followed his playful teasing as he had presented it, he had never more than relieved the moment by a passing jest.

The regular coming of "Aunt Jemima's valentine" was a mystery in the household.

It had been thirteen years since she had quarreled with Eli Taylor, her lover, and they had parted in anger, never to meet again. Since then she had stayed at home and quietly grown old.

Fourteen years ago she had been in the flush of this, her only romance, and St. Valentine's day had brought a great, thick envelope, in which lay, fragrant with perfume, a gorgeous valentine. Upon this was painted, after the old Dresden china pattern, a beautiful lady, with slender waist and corkscrew curls, standing beside a tall cavalier, who doffed his hat to her as he presented the card that bore her name, so finely and beautifully written that only very young eyes could read it unaided.

By lifting this card, one might read the printed rhyme beneath—the rhyme so tender and loving that it needed only the inscription of a name on the flap above it to make it all-sufficient in personal application to even the most fastidious.

This gorgeous affair was so artfully constructed that by drawing its pictured front forward it could be made to stand alone, when there appeared a fountain in the background, and a brilliant peacock with argus-eyed tail, a great rose on a tiny bush and a crescent moon. The oldest children had been very small when this resplendent confection had come into their home. Some of them had not been born, but they had all grown up in the knowledge of it.

There had been times in the tender memories of all of them when "Aunt 'Mimie" had locked her door, and because they had been very good, let them take a little peep at her beautiful valentine, which she kept carefully locked away in her bureau drawer.

They had on occasions been allowed to wash their hands and hold it—just a minute.

It had always been a thing to wonder over, and once—but this was the year it came—when her sky seemed as rosy as the ribbon about her waist—Miss Jemima had stood it up on the whatnot in the parlor when the church sociable met at her brother's house, and everybody in town had seen it, while for her it made the whole corner of the room beautiful.

But the quarrel had soon followed—a foolish lovers' quarrel—Eli had gone away in anger—and that had been the end.

Disputes over trifles are the hardest to mend, each party finding it so difficult to forgive the other for being angry for so slight a cause.

And so the years had passed.

For ten long years the beautiful valentine had lain carefully put away. For five years Jemima had looked at it with tearless eyes and a hardened heart. And then came the memorable first anniversary when the children of the household began to celebrate the day, and tiny comic pictured pages began flitting in from their school sweethearts. The realization of the new era was a shock to Miss Jemima. In the youthful merriment of those budding romances she seemed to see a sort of reflection of her own long-ago joy, and in the faint glow of it she felt impelled to go to her own room and to lock the door and look at the old valentine.

With a new, strange tremor about her heart and an unsteady hand she took it out, and when in the light of awakened emotion she saw once more its time-stained face and caught its musty odor, she seemed to realize again the very body of her lost love, and for the first time in all the years the fountains of her sorrow were broken up, and she sobbed her tired heart out over the old valentine.

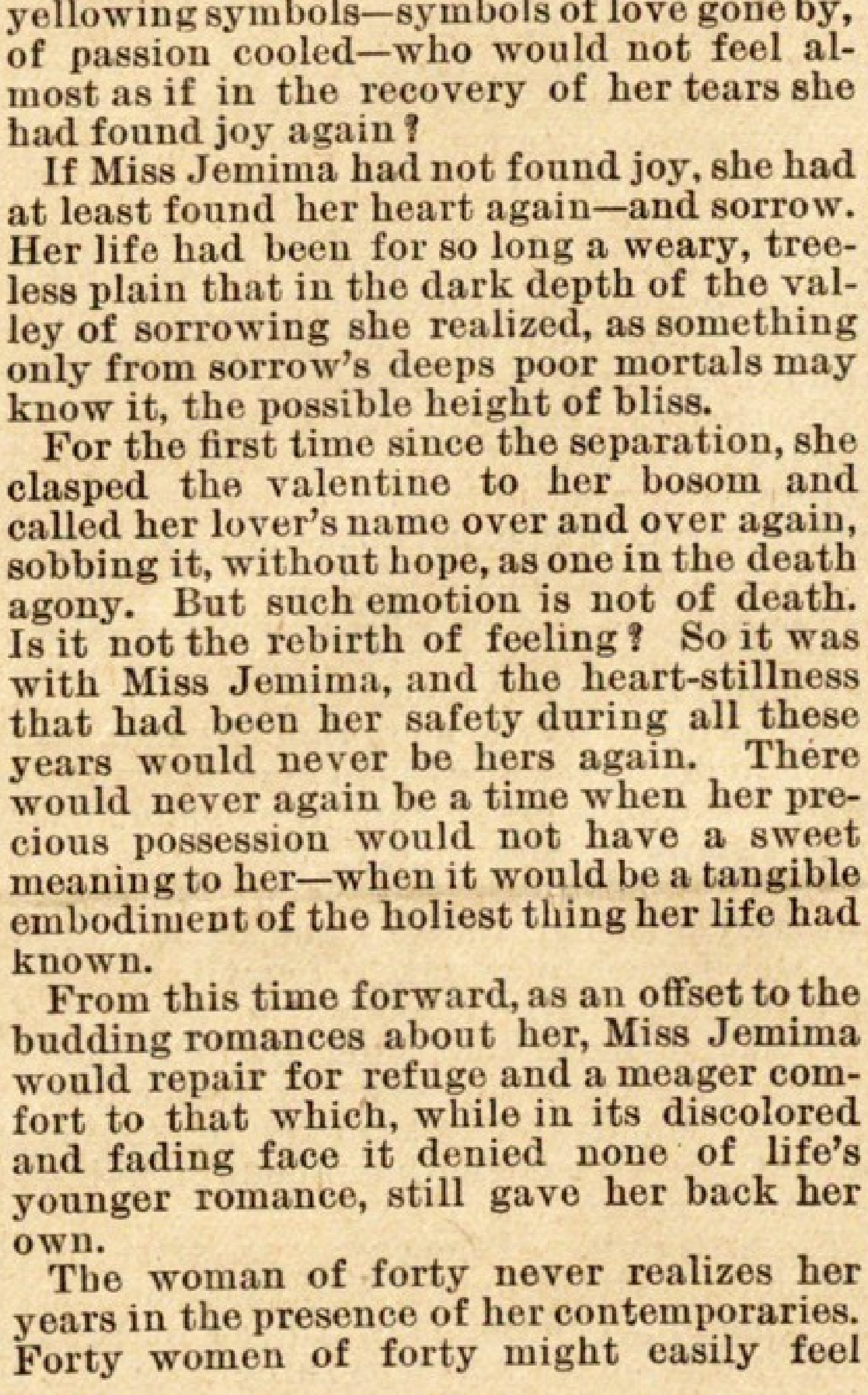
Is there a dead-hearted woman in all God's beautiful world, I wonder, who would not weep again, if she could, over some of life's yellowing symbols—symbols of love gone by, of passion cooled—who would not feel almost as if in the recovery of her tears she had found joy again?

If Miss Jemima had not found joy, she had at least found her heart again—and sorrow. Her life had been for so long a weary, treeless plain that in the dark depth of the valley of sorrowing she realized, as something only from sorrow's deeps poor mortals may know it, the possible height of bliss.

For the first time since the separation, she clasped the valentine to her bosom and called her lover's name over and over again, sobbing it, without hope, as one in the death agony. But such emotion is not of death. Is it not the rebirth of feeling? So it was with Miss Jemima, and the heart-stillness that had been her safety during all these years would never be hers again. There would never again be a time when her precious possession would not have a sweet meaning to her—when it would be a tangible embodiment of the holiest thing her life had known.

From this time forward, as an offset to the budding romances about her, Miss Jemima would repair for refuge and a meager comfort to that which, while in its discolored and fading face it denied none of life's younger romance, still gave her back her own.

The woman of forty never realizes her years in the presence of her contemporaries. Forty women of forty might easily feel young enough to scoff at the bald head, and deserve to be eaten by bears—but thirty-nine with a budding maid for fortieth scoffer? Never!



THE FOUNTAINS OF HER SORROW WERE BROKEN.

Miss Jemima, in her suddenly realized young-love setting, had become, to her own consciousness, old and of a date gone by. "Aunt Jemima" was naturally regarded by her blooming nephews and nieces, as well as by their intimates who wore their incipient mustaches still within their conscious top-lips or dimples dancing in their ruddy cheeks, quite in the same category as Mrs. Gibbs, who was sixty, or any of their aunts and grandmothers who sat serenely in daguerreotype along the parlor mantel.

But there is apt to come a time in the life of the live single woman of forty—if she be alive enough—when in the face of even negative and affectionate disparagement she is moved to declare herself.

Perhaps there be some who would say that this declaration savors of earth. Even so, the earth is the Lord's. It is one thing to be a flower pasted in a book, and quite another to be the bud a maiden wears—one thing to be To-day and another to be Yesterday.

One thing, indeed, it was to own a yellow, time-stained valentine, and quite a different one to be of the dimpled throng who crowded the Simpkinsville post-office on Valentine's day.

"I reckon them young ones would think it was perfec'ly re-dic'lous ef I was to git a valentine at my time of life," Miss Jemima said, aloud, to her looking-glass one morning. It was the day before St. Valentine's of the year following her day of tears.

"*But I'll show 'em!*" she added, with some rosolution, as she turned to her bureau drawer.

And she did show them. On the next day a great envelope addressed to Miss Jemima Martha Sprague came in with the package of lesser favors, and Miss Jemima suddenly found herself the absorbing center of a new interest—an interest that after having revolved about her awhile flew off in suspicion toward every superannuated bachelor or widower within a radius of thirty miles of Simpkinsville.

It had been a great moment for Miss Jemima when the valentine came in, and a trying one when, with genuine old-time blushes, she refused to open it for the crowd.

How she felt an hour later, when, in the secrecy of her own chamber, she took from its new envelope her own old self-sent valentine, only He who has tender knowledge of maidenly reserves and sorrows will ever know.

There was something in her face that forbade cruel pursuit of the subject when she returned to the family circle, and so, after a little playful bantering, the subject was dropped.

But the incident had lifted her from one condition into quite another in the family regard, and Miss Jemima found herself unconsciously living up to younger standards.

But this was ten years ago, and the mysterious valentine had become a yearly fact.

There had never been any explanations. When pressed to the wall, Miss Jemima had, indeed, been constrained to confess that "certainly every valentine that she had ever gotten had been sent her by a man" (how sweet and sad this truth!)

"And are all the new ones as pretty as your lovely old one, Aunt 'Mimie?"

To this last query she had carefully replied:

"I ain' never got none thet ain't every bit an' grain ez purty ez thet one—not a one."

"An' why don't you show 'em to us, then?"

Such obduracy was indeed hard to comprehend.

As the years passed, if her brother began to suspect, he made no sign of it save in an added tenderness. And, of course, he could not know.

On the anniversary upon which this little record of her life had opened, the situation was somewhat exceptional.

The valentine had hitherto always been mailed in Simpkinsville—her own town. This postmark had been noted and commented upon, and yet it had seemed impossible to have it otherwise. But this year, in spite of many complications and difficulties, she had resolved that the envelope should tell a new story.

The farthest point from which, within her possible acquaintance, it would naturally hail was the railroad town of—let us call it Hope.

The extreme difficulty in the case lay in the fact that the post-office here was kept by her old lover, Eli Taylor.

Here, for ten years, he had lived his reticent bachelor days, selling plows and garden seed and cotton prints and patent medicines, and keeping post-office in a small corner of his store.

Everybody knows how a spot, gazed at intently for a long time, changes color from red to green and then to white.

As Miss Jemima pondered upon the thought of sending herself a valentine through her old lover's hands, the color of the scheme began to change from impossible green to rosy red.

The point of objection became in the mysterious evolution its objective point.

Instead of dreading, she began ardently to desire this thing.

By the only possible plan by which she could manage secretly to have the valentine mailed in Hope—a plan over which she had lost sleep, and in which she had been finally aided by an illiterate colored servant going there, to return next day—it must reach her on the day before Valentine's. This day had come and gone, and her valentine had not returned to her. Had the negro failed to mail it? Had it remained all night in the post-office—in possession of her lover? Would she ever see it again? Would her brother ever, ever, ever get through with the children and finish giving out their valentines?

CHAPTER II.

Miss Jemima had not long to wait, and yet it seemed an age, before the distribution was over, and she felt rather than saw her brother moving in her direction.

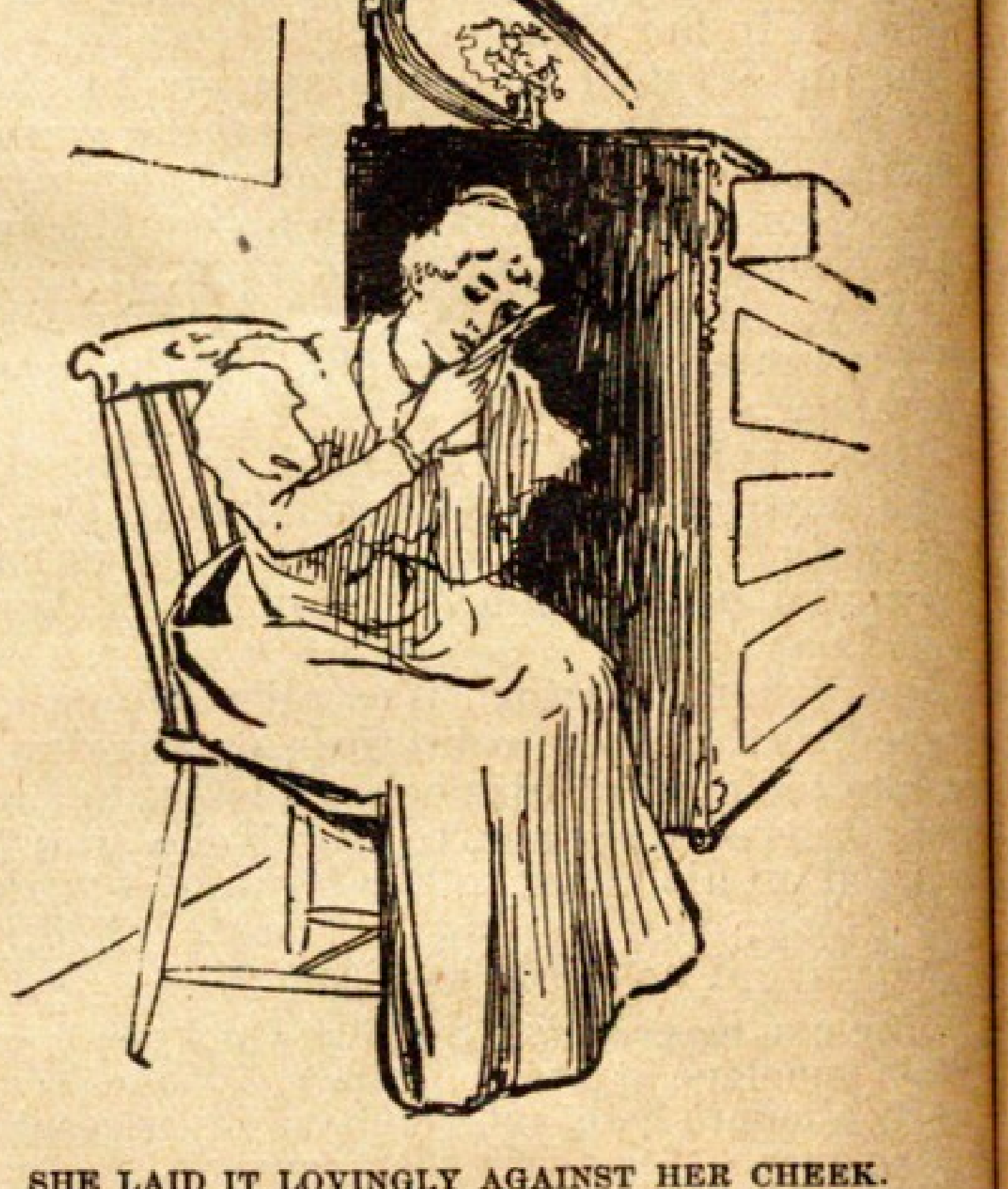
"Bigger an' purtier one 'n ever for Aunt 'Mimie this time—looks to me like," he said, as at last he laid the great envelope upon her trembling knee.

"Don't reckon it's anything extry—in partic'lar," she answered, not at all knowing what she said, as she continued her work, leaving the valentine where he had dropped it: not touching it, indeed, until she presently wound up her yarn in answer to the supper-bell. Then she took it, with her work-basket, into her own room, and dropping it into her upper bureau drawer, turned the key.

The moment when she broke the new envelope each year—late at night, alone in her locked chamber—had always been a sad one to Miss Jemima, and to-night it was even a sadder ordeal than ever. She had never before known how she cared for this old love-token.

As she sat to-night looking at the outside of the envelope, turning it over and over in her thin hands, great hot tears fell upon it and ran down upon her fingers, but she did not heed them. It was, indeed, a meager little embodiment of the romance of a life, but such as it was, she would not part with it. She would never send it out from her again—never, never, never.

It was even dearer now than ever before, after this recent passage through her lover's hands. At this thought she raised it lovingly and laid it against her cheek. Could he have handled it and passed it on without a thought of her? Impossible. And since he had thought of her, what must have been the nature of his thoughts? Was he jealous—jealous because somebody else was sending his old sweetheart a valentine?



SHE LAID IT LOVINGLY AGAINST HER CHEEK.

This year's envelope, selected with great pains and trouble from a sample catalogue and ordered from a distant city, was a fine affair profusely decorated with love symbols.

For a long time Miss Jemima sat enjoying the luxury of nearness to her lover that the unopened envelope had brought her before she felt inclined to confront the far-away romance typified by the yellowed sheet within. And yet she wanted to see even this again—to realize its recovery.

And so, with thoughts both eager and fearful, she finally inserted a hairpin carefully in the envelope, ripping it open delicately on two sides, so that it might come out without injury to its frail, perforated edges. Then, carefully holding its sides apart, she shook it.

And now— Something happened. One of God's best traits is that He doesn't tell all He knows—and sees.

How Miss Jemima felt or acted, whether she screamed or fainted, no one will ever know, when, instead of the familiar pictured thing, there fell into her lap a beautiful, brand-new valentine.

It was certainly a long time before she recovered herself enough to take the strange thing into her hands, and when she did so, it was with fingers that trembled so violently that a bit of paper that came within the valentine fluttered and fell beyond her reach. There it lay for fully several minutes before she had strength to move from her seat to recover it.

There was writing on the fluttering fragment, but what it was and why Miss Jemima wept over it and read it again and again are other trifling things that perhaps God does well not to tell.

The details of other people's romances are not always interesting to outsiders.

However, in this particular case, it may be interesting to know that the woman who took charge of the old lover's room in Hope and who had an investigating way with her, produced seven or eight torn scraps of paper collected at this period from his scrap basket, on each one of which was written, in slightly varying terms, bits of rough sketches of a note in which occurred broken sentences like the following: "—sending you this new valentine just as hearty as I sent the old one eighteen years—"

"You sha'n't never want for a fresh one again every year long as I live, unless you take—"

"—if you want the old one back again and me along with it."

One of the lowest things that even a very depraved and unprincipled person ever did is to collect torn scraps from anybody's waste basket and to read them. To print them or otherwise make them public is a thing really too contemptible to contemplate in ordinary circumstances. But this case, if intelligently considered, seems somewhat exceptional, and perhaps it is well to do so, for, be it borne in mind, all these scraps, without exception, and a few others too sacred to produce even here, are the things that Eli Taylor, postmaster, did not send to his old sweetheart, Jemima Martha Sprague.

Miss Jemima always burned her scraps, and so, even were it well to condescend to seeking similar negative testimony from her concerning her laboriously-written reply, it would have been quite impossible. Certain it is, however, that she posted a note on the following day, and that a good many interesting things happened in quick succession after this. And then?

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There was a little, quiet, middle-aged wedding in the church on Easter Sunday. It was the old lover's idea to have it then, as he said their happiness was a resurrection from the dead, and belonged to the Easter season, and there was no one to object.

Miss Jemima showed her new valentine to the family before the wedding came off, but in spite of all their coaxing and begging, she observed a rigid reticence in regard to all those that had come between that and the old one; and so, seeing the last one actually in evidence, and rejoicing in her happiness, they would only smile and whisper that they supposed he and she had been "quar'lin' it out on them valentines."

The old man, Eli, in spite of his indomitable pride, had come out of his long silence with all due modesty, blaming himself for many things.

"I ain't fitten for you, Jemimy, honey, no mo'n I was eighteen years ago," he said, his arm timidly locking her chair, the night before the wedding, "but ef you keered enough about me to warm over the little valentine I sent you nigh twenty year ago, and to make out to live on it, I reckon I can keep you supplied with jest ez good ez thet, fresh every day an' hour. But befo' I take you into church I want to call yo' attention to the fac' thet I'm a criminal li'ble to the State's prison for openin' yo' mail—an' if you say so, why, I'll haf to go."

"Well, Eli," Miss Jemima answered, quite seriously, "ef you're li'ble to State's prisou for what you have done, I don't know but I am worthy to go to a hotter place—for the deceit I've practiced."

"Well," said Eli, "I reckon ef the truth was told, the place where we jest nachelly both b'long is the insane asylum—for the ejiots we've acted. When I reflect that I might 'a' been ez happy ez I am now eighteen year ago, an' think about all the time we've lost— Well— How comes it that Easter comes so late this year, anyhow?"

THE END.

A Ride to Independence.

BY FRANCES BENT DILLINGHAM.

Belinda came softly down the stairs and looked in at the front room where her sister sat sewing.

"I'm going out for a little walk," she said in her gentle, half apologetic voice.

Her sister looked up sharply. "Well, don't be gone long, and you'd better put on your jacket; it's gettin' real kinder chilly."

"Oh, I don't believe I need anything extra; I shan't be cold," Belinda remonstrated.

"Yes, you will, too," Mrs. Bascom said decidedly. "You go right upstairs and get your sack."

And Belinda turned and went obediently back to her room.

"It's dreadfully silly for me to have to put it on," she muttered, nodding to herself in the glass. "Seems as though I was old enough to know;" and she sighed, noting the shadow of coming lines in her forehead and the sharper curve of her cheek. But she drew on the little jacket over her tight-fitting black silk basque and smoothed it down carefully over the bright blue bow at her throat.

Then she went downstairs again, but paused a moment on the lowest step. "I wonder if I'd better put on my rubbers," she meditated. "I don't believe I need them," with a sudden guilty look at the closed sitting-room door. But she opened it as she passed and said, "Good-bye, Sarah," very quickly, half fearing that if she waited her sensitive conscience might compel her to mention the neglected rubbers.

Sarah, at the window, watched her go down the street.

"She's just as happy as ever," she said to herself. "It's a good deal better I didn't let John Baker hang round here. She's one of those soft-hearted creatures that'd marry any man that asked her, I do believe. But she wasn't goin' to marry John Baker if I could help it. I've had experience with men and I know them through and through." Mrs. Bascom's married life had been brief and unhappy. "Why, they say that John Baker smokes, and he don't attend no church regular, so far's I can make out. That's just like Silas exactly." Silas was Mrs. Bascom's deceased husband. In her mind all smoking, non-church members belonged to the same class; character was not considered, and, after all, what man could have character under such circumstances? "She'll be mighty thankful some day that I saved her from a life of misery," and Mrs. Bascom sighed feelingly. "It's been more'n a year now, and she seems to be gettin' over it nicely, though I must say I'm thankful he don't live in this town." And Mrs. Bascom's eyes returned to the village street down which Belinda had disappeared. "I wonder where Belinda was goin'. To call on Margaret Brown, I s'pose. It's strange Belinda should take to Margaret so, such a lively young thing—though, as far's that goes, she ain't much younger than Belinda," she added, hastily, with sisterly pride; "but she's so up and comin'. It's lucky she only visits here a week or so, she might make Belinda just like her. Miss Ware told me yesterday she rides a bicycle." And Mrs. Bascom's thoughts stopped in frightened contemplation of such arrant boldness.

Meantime Belinda had gone, as her sister predicted, to call on Margaret, who was visiting fond, old-fashioned relatives for a few weeks in this sequestered little village. Her friend was in the back yard with the bicycle, and caught sight of Belinda walking primly up the path to the front door.

"Heigho!" she called, merrily; and Belinda came around the corner of the house and sat on the steps while Margaret rubbed up her wheel.

There was a great contrast between the two girls not wholly due to the mere difference in their ages. Margaret Brown had come to womanhood with many and absorbing interests in her busy, healthful career, while Belinda seemed to have little to make her life full and beautiful, and she unconsciously felt this the more now that a new possibility had faded from her horizon with the banished John Baker. There was, consequently, a resigned submission in Belinda's sweet face very different from the fine, alert strength in Margaret's, and a certain indecision in the droop of her shoulders quite unlike Margaret's queenly carriage. There might easily have been five instead of two years between them.

"Oh, I have had the most delightful ride!" Margaret cried, rubbing vigorously at the handle-bar of her machine.

Belinda sighed wistfully.

"What fun it must be!" she murmured.

Margaret caught the sadness in her voice.

"Oh, Belinda!" she cried, dropping the rag with which she was polishing, "get on and try it—do. I'll hold it steady."

Belinda shook her head in fright.

"Oh, I couldn't! I really couldn't!"

"Oh, yes, you could!" Margaret cried, turning the wheel out into the garden-path. "Come quick!"

Belinda rose from her seat on the steps and came over to where Margaret stood.

"Get on," Margaret said, "I'll hold you."

Belinda gave a little cry.

"Oh, Margaret! I'm afraid I couldn't."

"Yes, you can, too," Margaret said, determinedly; "get right on!"

Belinda was so used to obeying that she put one foot on the pedal; then she withdrew it quickly and looked about.

"What if any one should see?" she whispered, but an excited girlish light was in her eyes.

"There isn't a soul anywhere around," Margaret answered, promptly. "There, that's all right; there you are—hold on."

There was little need to give Belinda this caution; she held on like a vise, with a pale, frightened face.

"Oh, are you sure you can keep me up?" she gasped. "There, I'm going to fall now—I know I am."

They had gone but a few steps when she protested.

"There, you must be tired; you'd better let me get down."

"No, I'm not tired a bit," Margaret said, firmly. "I'm going to teach you to ride, Belinda. When you feel yourself going one way you must turn the wheel that way. See—it's very easy." Then Margaret had to use all her strength for a moment as Belinda almost went over. "No, not that way; the other."

"Oh, I see," Belinda said eagerly. "You want to turn it just the wrong way;" after which understanding she did much better.

This was Belinda's first experience with athletics in any form, and she grew so interested and excited that two little red spots came out on either cheek, and she forgot to ask Margaret if she was tired, but kept on so perseveringly that Margaret herself had to suggest it was a long enough first lesson.

"I never tried to learn anything in my life before," she said, breathless with delight. "Do you really think I'll ever be able to ride?"

"Of course," Margaret said, encouragingly. She was not going to tell Belinda what hard work she found in holding her straight in her erratic movements.

But Belinda's face fell.

"Of course I couldn't ride, even if I learned how," she said, confusedly.

"Why not?" asked Margaret.

It would scarcely be polite to Margaret to say that Sarah did not think it ladylike, so Belinda invented the first excuse she could think of.

"I haven't got any bicycle."

Margaret looked up with sudden interest.

"Do you know what I've been thinking, Belinda? I'm going to Europe this fall, and I would be perfectly delighted to let you have my wheel while I'm gone. I'll teach you how to ride and you'll get no end of pleasure out of it."

Belinda looked both frightened and delighted.

"Oh!" she gasped, "what would Sarah say?"

Margaret meditated. She well knew Mrs. Bascom was an important factor and a zealous opponent of all innovations.

"She wouldn't care," she said recklessly. And then more gravely: "Why do you say anything about it until you have learned? Then, when she finds you ride beautifully and are enjoying it, she won't object."

"But I don't think I ought to take your wheel," Belinda protested, returning to the lesser but more polite objection.

"Now, Belinda, it would be a real comfort if you would take care of it for me. You can keep it right here at uncle's, and come and practice until you want your sister to know about it. If I don't leave it with you, I shall have to lend it to some of my friends in the city, who won't take half such good care of it."

"Oh, but I might smash it up because I don't know how to ride," Belinda said anxiously, torn between desire and doubt.

Margaret laughed outright. She might as well tell the truth. If she could only bring some sweetness and light into this dear little woman's life, she did not care if her wheel were left in fragments.

"Well, Belinda, you're just going to make me say it," with a tender quiver in her voice. "I want you to have a good time, and I want you to have my wheel, and I don't care if you do smash it all to pieces."

What else could Belinda do, betwixt long habit of yielding and new desire for wheeling, but give way to Margaret's kindness?

"How good you are!" she cried. "It would be beautiful if I could ride. I should like it better than anything I ever did;" better than the church sociables and sewing-circles, she added to herself.

But on the way home another thought came to her. What would John Baker think if he should see her on a bicycle. To be sure, she had given him up because of her sister's insinuations and determined opposition, and he might be married now for all Belinda knew; yet somehow in all of her decisions—and Belinda, with a New England woman's conscience, had many serious decisions in the course of one day—she thought of him and what his opinion would be. This seemed the most important step she had ever taken, and, since she could not turn to her sister, she longed with a great longing for his advice on the matter.

If it had not been for Margaret's determination that Belinda should learn to ride and her constant encouragement as a teacher, it is to be feared that Belinda's hot desire for wheeling might have cooled. It is hard to be persistent when you must struggle into an uncertain saddle after repeated and painful efforts, only to find your steed careering directly into prickly blackberry vines or against a hard board fence, and this day after day behind the back of an opposition which is sure soon to be heaped upon your aching head. But there was a strata of perseverance underlying Belinda's gentle nature and a quickness in her slender frame that at length brought her to a safe, slow ride around the yard. When she dismounted in a sudden and rather astonishing manner, and said to Margaret with unusual enthusiasm, "I can ride now, can't I? Oh, I'm so glad you taught me—I'm so glad!" Margaret rejoiced and felt that her project for Belinda's happiness was firmly established.

But it was long before Belinda could be tempted outside the garden gate. She was very much afraid that somebody might see her, and, what is a much more common fear to a novice, declared she should run into a team. But at length she was persuaded into a lonely road behind the house, and there she practiced, riding back and forth, with Margaret trotting obligingly by her side, until she declared she would go all alone, and off she went, and back she came in triumph.

Margaret would have gladly bequeathed to her her short riding-skirt, and Belinda once tried it on with much trepidation.

"Don't you think it's dreadfully short? It shows my ankles," she protested.

"It is really too long for you," Margaret said. "It was too long for me, and I am taller than you. Why, some women wear skirts almost up to their knees, and some wear trousers, just a little full, you know."

Belinda looked horror-stricken. Margaret had overreached herself this time.

"I—I don't know as I'd better ride the bicycle if that kind of women do," she murmured, fearfully.

"Oh, well, the very nicest ladies ride wheels," Margaret said, hastily, as she carried the objectionable skirt away. When she returned, tears were in Belinda's eyes.

"I hope you'll excuse me," she said tremulously. "I didn't mean to be silly."

"Oh, that's all right," Margaret replied.

After all, it made little difference. There was no one to tell Belinda how old-fashioned but quaintly sweet she looked beside this modern invention.

When it was time for Margaret to leave the little village, a perceptible change was coming over Belinda. Her cheeks had more color. Her figure was more erect. She no longer asked her sister what she should wear and where she might go each time she went out; and Mrs Bascom actually saw her go down the street one day in her black silk waist when she had expressly told her to put on her green poplin. It gave Belinda a strange feeling of authority to have gained control over so unruly a steed, and a new spirit of independence to have made and persevered in a decision without her sister's peremptory assistance.

One day, soon after Margaret had left, Belinda was going down the garden path on her way to her second absolutely independent ride, when Mrs. Bascom called from the window.

"Belinda," she cried, "come right back and change your dress! I declare you ain't going out lookin' that way, are you?"

Belinda turned and walked toward the house, partly from force of obedient habit, partly because she knew her sister would shout after her until she did. She came into the front room with a sudden pink color in her cheeks.

"I declare to goodness," Mrs. Bascom exclaimed, "you ain't a-goin' out this raw day with that thin waist and old skirt on, I hope."

Belinda had dressed in just this way for bicycling purposes, and an unusual, determined light came into her eyes.

"Now, Sarah," she said, "I've put on just the kind of things I want to wear, and I'm going to wear them. Seems to me when I'm most thirty years old I ought to know how to dress."

Sarah stared at her with wide-open eyes.

"Well, of all independence!" she said.

"But don't you think I ought to be independent if I'm ever going to be?"

Sarah took up her sewing and turned away. Belinda took a little step forward.

"I ain't never considered the question," she said, grimly.

Then Belinda did an unheard-of and unexpected thing; she went over to her sister and kissed her, and then went quickly out of the front door. looked after her to be sure it was Belinda.

"Well, I never," she declared. "P'r'aps I have been too domineering."

Belinda started on her ride along a quiet road away from the village. It was not quite so hard to assert herself as she had supposed; she almost wished she had told Sarah about her bicycling then and there.

"I'll tell her to-night," Belinda said, as she rode on, and she sighed as she thought of her long-deferred declaration of independence; a year ago it might have made much more difference in two lives.

It was a beautiful day, but Belinda did not once look at the clear sky and autumn woods as she rode along, for she was not a sufficiently expert rider to view the scenery and keep to her straight course; so she did not see the bare blue-black trees that cast a gentle, dark haze over the later autumn colors of russet brown and dull red. She did not even dare to steal a glance at the long piebald line of leaves that lay curled by the fences. She kept her eye on the wheel and her hand on the brake, and a pretty picture she herself made—prettier than any wooded slope, this bit of dainty womanhood, whose fashion of bygone days seemed to harmonize with the autumn time. She had on the little tight-fitting black silk basque with the crocheted buttons down the front, and there was a bright blue bow at the throat, a little overshadowed by the black velvet bonnet strings, for Belinda had worn a bonnet ever since she was twenty-one.

She was going on well, and feeling happier and more confident every moment, when she came to a slight hill, down which the wheel began to descend a little more rapidly; but she had her little black-mitted hand on the brake, and all would have been well if the barge had not just turned into the road. Now a barge, being a large two-horse conveyance, was a very formidable thing for this inexperienced bicyclist to pass, and Belinda's breath came fast and her cheeks grew very red in her determination not to lose her self-control. She had almost passed the dreadful threatener, when she chanced to glance up at the vehicle. There was but one passenger in the barge, and that passenger was—John Baker. Belinda saw his face looking down on her in genuine surprise, and then she felt her wheel turn and slip, and a pain ran through her wrist.

The driver stopped his horses and climbed down from his perch, but before he could reach Belinda, John was holding her up and tenderly wiping the dust from her face, while Belinda moved not at all, only looked at him through tears of mingled joy and pain.

"The bicycle ain't broke," said the driver, but neither Belinda nor John heard him.

"Why, your wrist is bleeding," John said, and he tried to fasten his handkerchief about it, but, either because Belinda looked at him so hard or because he wished to prolong so pleasant a task, it took him many minutes.

"Better git in, Miss Belindy," invited the driver, lifting the bicycle to the front seat; "you can't ride home if you've hurt your wrist."

"Oh, it isn't much," Belinda protested. But John helped her into the barge and, perhaps because of an almost imperceptible motion of hers, perhaps because of the look he had seen in her eyes, he sat down just beside her.

"Perhaps I'd better not sit down here," he ventured.

"Oh, yes!" Belinda said.

"I'm glad we ran into each other," he whispered, adding, gallantly, "but I'd rather we'd been the ones to be hurt."

"Oh, no!" Belinda cried, lifting frightened eyes to his; and John moved a little nearer.

"I didn't know you was ridin' a bicycle, Miss Belindy," said the driver from the front seat.

"I've got one, too," John said.

Belinda turned to him with a sudden radiant smile, then her face clouded a little.

"Sarah doesn't know about my riding," she whispered.

John looked at her in amazement.

"You're braver than you used to be, Belinda."

There was a sad significance in his voice, and Belinda looked down.

"Yes," she answered tremulously, then added, brightening: "I've grown a good deal braver since I learned to ride. I—I was going to tell her about it to-night," she ventured, after a little pause.

It was impossible for John to move any closer, but instead he bent over to whisper:

"Suppose we tell her together."

The driver had just looked back to ask Belinda how much she paid for her wheel, but he turned quickly to the front again with a low whistle of surprise, though he was undoubtedly a gentleman, as his broad back thereafter testified.

"Suppose we tell her something else, too," John whispered; and Belinda heaved a sigh of content.

"But what will Sarah say?" she asked a little after, when they had come to the village, and must sit farther apart, and could only surreptitiously hold each other's hand.

"I don't care what she says now," John answered, gayly; "do you, Belinda?"

Belinda looked up at him thoughtfully, and then answered his happy smile.

"Well, no; I don't know as I do," she said, bravely.

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THE DAY WE CELEBRATE.

Observing high days, holidays and birthdays is something of which a great many people are very fond. It has been said that we need more holidays. Granting this, but there are many persons who never observe any, whatever they may be.

There is one day that is full of suggestions—a day so linked with the history of our country that patriotic sentiments come to our hearts at its mere mention. Washington's Birthday ought to have a special programme of its own. It would be an excellent idea to make it a history day, a stars-and-stripes day, to hold meetings and festivals in commemoration of the great and glorious struggle that gave us our liberty.

Every public school in the land ought to mark the event by suitable exercises. As the schools close for this day, why not make the afternoon previous a gala season, when the events of Washington's career may be reviewed, patriotic addresses listened to, suitable music rendered, and entertainments, such as charades or plays appropriate to the time, be given by the pupils? Make it a day to be looked forward to; a day of delight; a day on which the young and unfolding mind may grasp the idea that such patriotism as the Father of his Country possessed is sufficient to make a name immortal.

Teach them that love of country is one of the greatest of virtues, and that only by loyalty and fidelity to the flag and the great principles it represents can the men and women of the future hope to maintain that high position which the United States holds among the nations of the earth.

And for the young people themselves who are out of school and just beginning the serious affairs of life, let there be old-folks' concerns and entertainments, Continental parties, masquerades in the good old costumes of the days of Washington. Let there be sham battles, with snow forts, if so be it that snow is plenty. And it would not hurt the elders to take a hand in this fray. It would warm up the blood, stir up the ideas, rouse the patriotism and break the monotony that too often settles over a middle-aged existence. There should be songs and feasting, and dancing and rejoicing all along the line, and the assembled guests should thank Heaven that such a man as George Washington ever lived, a man whom nothing could discourage, a man who, through trials, disappointments, vicissitudes, treachery, ingratitude and persecution, kept ever alive in his heart one hope, one idea, one determination, and that was to secure to the citizens of this country and their posterity forever the blessings of civil and religious liberty. And when the day's festivities are over, the most appropriate ending will be that all join in the doxology:

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

◆

THE CHEAPEST BICYCLE.

Experience proves that in the case of the bicycle, as in all articles of general utility, the best is the cheapest. Wherever safety of life and limb is involved, beyond question there should be no doubtful economy practiced. It is not the injury that may be done to the bicycle by a breakdown which is the thing to be considered, but the possible disability of the rider. A breakdown means a possible broken limb, fractured skull, or disfigurement of the face, which may be carried through life to the great personal loss, inconvenience and humiliation of the bearer. Accidents to the person are things which cannot be computed in dollars and cents, therefore a cheap bicycle may prove a very dear one to the purchaser. The first cost to the wheelman for his outfit is the least of his expenses, and a good machine his very best investment.

We are led to these reflections by the announcement that the new year will witness a wholesale reduction in the price of bicycles. Several corporations engaged in the manufacture of other mechanical devices announce that they intend to divert their plants to the manufacture of bicycles, and to flood the market with a cheaper article in this line than has heretofore been offered.

While a reduction in the price of a first-class wheel will be welcomed by thousands, it by no means follows that the multiplication of cheap bicycles by new and inexperienced makers will prove an unmixed benefit to the public.

◆

QUEER CAPRICES OF INVENTORS.

One would scarcely expect to find anything extremely funny in the ancient vaults and cases of the Patent Office, or run across anything that would furnish the most uproarious merriment in the official papers of that great establishment. But all the same, there are hours of amusement and no end of jokes when some of the applications for patents come under consideration. Among the queerest things are the perpetual-motion models. They are brought in by all classes of persons, from the very evident crank to the solid-looking business man who would scarcely be suspected of harboring such a wild notion. It would be interesting to know how many applications for patents in this line had been made at the office, but they certainly number thousands. The examiners have been so besieged by this class of inventors that they are under instructions to refuse everything but a working model.

When the perpetual-motion crank comes in he is told that nothing short of the completed machinery, in perfect working order, will insure him attention. Sometimes he brings what he claims as the embodiment of his idea, but, for some reason or other, it fails to work. Then he claims that it has been damaged in transit, and goes away to fix it. Sometimes he comes back, but oftener he does not, and this usually is the end of this one; but there are plenty more, and probably will be to the end of time.

Processes and methods have been patented and there are means described for locating precious metals by the use of divining rods. It is a curious fact that patents have been granted which have been treated to all sorts of ridicule and considered worthless, but long afterward have come into notice and are among the standard articles of trade. There are inventions to prevent collision by rail, among these being one by means of which head-on collisions are avoided by one train running over the top of the other, then dropping upon the rails again and continuing its journey uninjured. While this may work beautifully in theory, it has not been considered sufficiently practical to be put into operation.

Nothing has been more ridiculed than flying machines. This idea and that of perpetual motion have been considered impractical, unsolvable problems. Who knows whether the future may not hold the solution of both.

TEACHING BESS TO RIDE.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

Bright the golden sunlight,
Fresh the morning breeze,
Fragrant with the odor
Of tall cedar trees.
"Put your foot so, on the pedal,
And mount from this side."
Bessie has a bicycle,
I'm teaching her to ride.

"Now look out," says grandpa
From the farm-house door,
"Don't you get a fall, Bess,
Or you shan't ride no more."
Fall! when *I'm* beside her
Harm shall not betide,
Bessie on the bicycle,
While *I* teach her how to ride.

Rolling down the roadway,
Ringing up the lane,
Slowly through the wood-path,
Swiftly out again.
Gayly trills her laughter,
Throbs my heart with pride,
Who will may guide the wheels of state,
So I teach my Bess to ride.

Who will may go a-hunting,
No horse and hounds for me;
Who will may go a-sailing
His yacht upon the sea.
Who will may take toboggan's
Slippery, slanting, downward slide—
But give me my wheel, and coaching
My Bonnie Bess to ride.

◆

LIFE-SAVING STATIONS AND THEIR WORK.

A bystander, after watching with interest the movements and manipulations of the Life-Saving Service during a recent accident, remarked that of all Government employees those in this branch ought to be the best cared for, the best paid and the best treated of any class of men in the public service. Upon their coolness, promptness, courage and nerve depend the lives of thousands of people.

Regardless of personal peril, they are ever ready, and no matter what the circumstances may be, a sense of duty alone inspires them. When their exhausting labors are finished, it is much to be feared that they are not provided with all necessary comforts and conveniences. True, the terms "comfort" and "convenience" are relative, and many may urge that hardship and hardiness are necessary for the most perfect development.

The Life-Saving Service receives too little attention and too small appropriations. Accommodations ought to be better, the force should be increased and everything ought to be done to lift this most valuable and hazardous business to its proper level.

Many efforts have been made in this direction, but without adequate results. It is time that right-minded, thinking people recognized its importance and gave it the fostering care that it so richly deserves.

◆

NEW USE FOR SEARCH-LIGHTS.

There is nothing that strikes such terror to evil-doers as bright light.

It has many times been suggested that if there could be an electric light on every street-corner the Department of Charities and Corrections would have less to do, and the police would find crimes and misdemeanors decreasing with startling rapidity.

Darkness is the opportunity of the criminal. With a knowledge of this fact in his mind, the proprietor of a large manufacturing establishment, whose employees were on a strike, had search-lights prepared, and all night long they swept the adjacent country, looking after prowlers and mischief-makers, and the result has been most satisfactory. But little damage to persons or property had been reported, and the immediate vicinity of the works was as quiet as Sunday.

This experiment furnishes an excellent hint for the peace-keeping authorities of large cities. It would be the best possible investment to plant search-lights so that they would sweep every locality haunted by the depraved and lawless classes. Sin and crime shrink back before the clear, penetrating rays of an electric light; they cannot bear its searching insistence.

It would cost less to light the dark places of our cities than it does to punish the crimes that flourish because of the darkness. It will, undoubtedly, take a long time for the authorities of municipalities to learn that there are powers in the world more easy to manage, cheaper to pay, and more effective to prevent crime than an army of blue-coats.

◆

—There is nothing purer than honesty—nothing sweeter than charity—nothing warmer than love—nothing richer than wisdom—nothing brighter than virtue—and nothing more steadfast than faith.

ENGLAND'S ARMY AND NAVY.

2.—The Navy.

BY REV. SAMUEL PARKES CADMAN.

Passing with a friend along the Sloe at Plymouth, my attention was called to a group of "lobsters and Jacks" taking the air on the famous old promenade. Now "lobster" is a slang word for the red-coated marine, a reference to his scarlet appearance; and "Jack," of course, means the gallant tars who man Her Britannic Majesty's fleet. The Plymouth division of that fleet lay off Mount Edgecumbe, on the other side of the bay. During the whole of my visit to the haunts of Frobisher, Drake and Hawkins, I was deafened with bugle calls, beset by squads of soldiers and sailors, and charmed beyond expression at the musical treat afforded by Mr. Frank Winterbottom's magnificent band of the Plymouth Marines. There was no need for any one to remind me that I was at a naval center; every evidence showed it, and showed it persistently, morning, noon and night. The visit I afterward made to Portsmouth, Chatham, Woolwich and the Admiralty gave me an insight into the administration of the naval power of England which compelled one's admiration.

Whatever may be the faults and weaknesses of a nation's Army—and in England they are many—the Navy is, as Captain Mahan has pointed out in his remarkable volumes, the real source of power, and the nation owning the sea can own the land. Again and again have I noticed in the *Ledger* for the past three years appeals for a defensive naval armament to protect our growing commercial interests. I never realized the full wisdom of these appeals until my recent visit to Europe.

Great Britain has an all-powerful navy; and she not only has an immense navy, she also has coaling stations at strategic points all over the world. Now, an ironclad without a coaling station is a horse without corn.

Again: She controls so many submarine cables that she can know how and where and when to place her fleets to the detriment of nations like Russia and France, who depend upon England for news in times of peace which they wouldn't get in times of war.

The gross tonnage of the commercial navy of England is about 14,000,000 tons. To protect this marine, which is three times and a half larger than that of America and twelve times larger than that of France, she employs the following war fleet: There are 85 armored ships, mounting 2,855 guns; and 147 unarmored ships, mounting 2,966 guns. She has 80 gunboats, 4 dispatch vessels, 29 receiving and store ships, 232 torpedo boats, 2,723 officers, 49,330 seamen and 14,750 marines, officers and men.

Now look at the grand totals for a moment. The total number of guns in these floating fortresses, commerce destroyers and torpedo fiends is 6,403. The total active list of officers and men employed is 66,803. The annual appropriation for '94–'95 was $91,858,565, an increase of $20,000,000 upon the appropriations of '93–'94.

Twenty-three flag officers command the fleets of the various divisions and centers. The tonnage of the vessels reaches up to 15,000 tons. The battleships proper number over fifty, and ten are in course of building.

Again: Despite avowals to the contrary, the man behind the gun counts for much, though some think mechanism has pretty well counted him out. But the Chinese sailor was defeated because of the Japanese courage and vim. In an actual engagement the intelligence and determination of the sailors would be exercised in different directions than of old, but just as much of both would be needed as when Perry swept the Lakes.

The English sailor is far before any other on the continent of Europe, and the great number of the ships afloat enables officers and men to constantly maneuver in actual battle array. It was owing to a complicated movement of this character that the *Victoria* was rammed in the Mediterranean Sea some three years ago.

We did not see the prime of the English fleet during our Columbian celebrations. These are kept in the Channel and Mediterranean squadrons, upon which depends the defense of the homeland.

The English sailor is a hearty, bluff, hail-fellow-well-met lad, with none of the bad manners so prevalent with many Britishers. He will fight to-day and embrace to-morrow—each as duty demands or pleasure affords. Nobody is more popular ashore or afloat, and he is the first to laugh derisively at the frozen dignity of some of his fellow-countrymen.

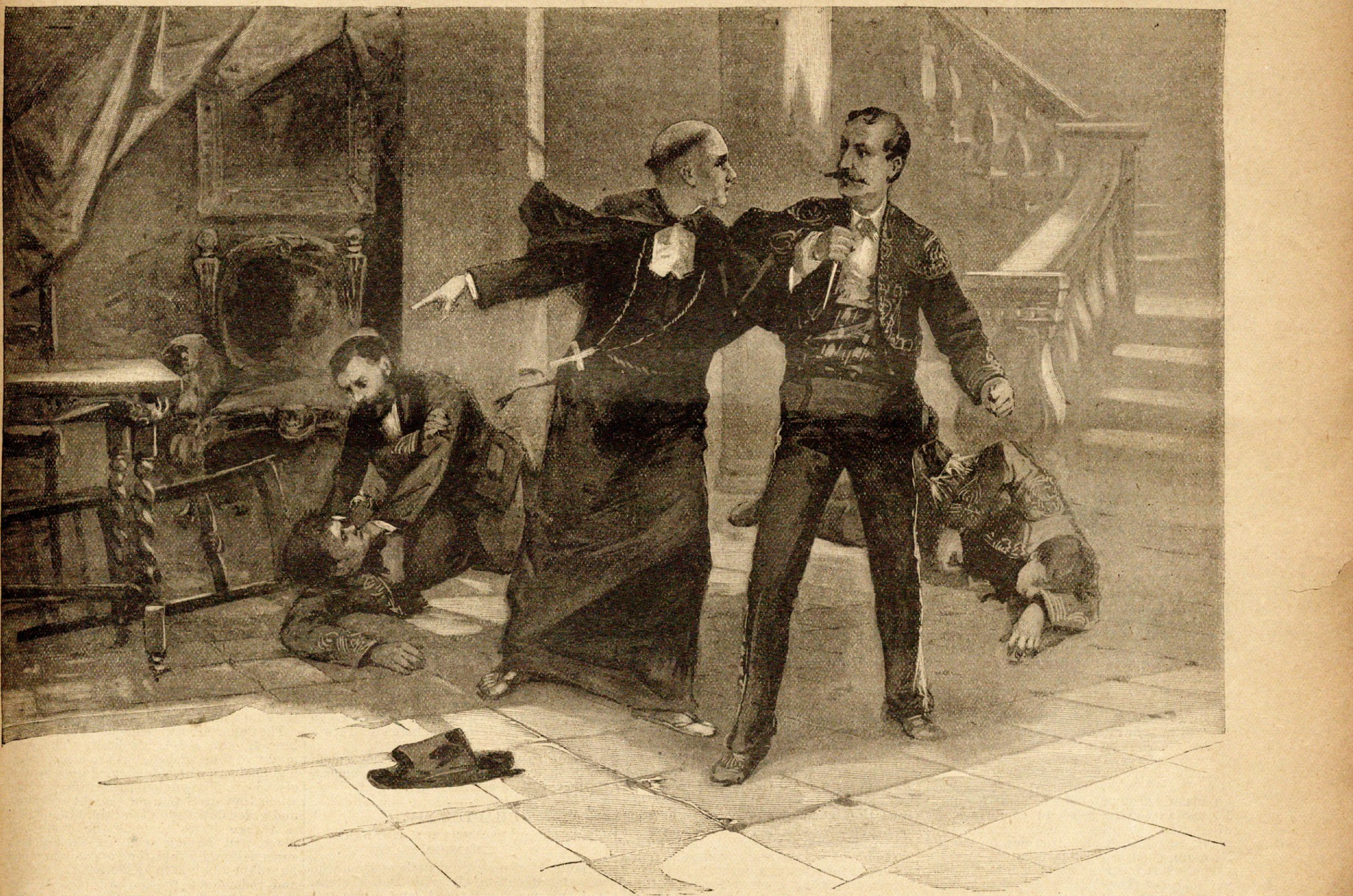
The marine is an amphibious animal, equally at home on land or at sea. He forms the military department of the fleet, and no regiments have prouder records than the three divisions of the Chatham, Portsmouth and Plymouth Marine Regiment, with their splendid bands and general bearing.

The Admiralty of England orders out a flying squadron within two weeks.

Lastly, there is no doubt that in the event of a naval fight of magnitude a big percentage of the vessels engaged will be destroyed and sunken. The victory will ultimately come to that Power able to replace these and repair shattered forces at the shortest notice.

England proposes to meet this foreseen emergency with 80,000 men of the Royal Navy Reserve, including such sailors as the captains of the Cunard, White Star and other transatlantic lines; also the captains of the Pacific and Indian and Australasian routes. And her facilities for repairing old and building new vessels of war can only be apprehended when studied on the spot, as I saw them this past year. They are simply enormous.

In conclusion, England's Army is gallant, good, but depleted; her Navy is superb; and the troubles she faces in the East compel her to increase both daily.



"REFRAIN, MY SON, AND FLY FOR YOUR LIFE! THE SOLDIERS ARE COMING!"

THE DARK STRANGER.*

BY JOHN R. MUSICK,

Author of "*Mysterious* Mr. Howard."

["THE DARK STRANGER" was commenced in No. 3. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS INSTALLMENTS.

[In order that *new* readers of the *Ledger* may begin with the following installment of this story, and understand it just the same as though they had read it all from the beginning, we here give a synopsis of that portion of it which has already been published: The scene of the story is New York, and the time nearly fifty years ago. Robert Morton is a rich merchant and a childless widower. When his nephew, Claude Morton, his only relative and heir, left college he took him into his business house. Claude falls in love with Hallie Tyler, whose father, George Tyler, a former friend of Morton's, had failed in business seven years before and had gone to California to recuperate his health and fortune. Morton objects to Claude's engagement to the daughter of the bankrupt. News comes from California that Tyler has made a fortune, and Morton, about to start on a business trip to that State, tells Claude that if he finds this news to be true he will withdraw his objection to his engagement. Morton finds the news true, and he and Tyler start for New York. On their route they are attacked by robbers, and Tyler is robbed and killed, but Morton escapes. When he reaches New York he is very reticent about the affair, giving but the barest facts in a letter to Hallie, whom he declines to see. He will not speak to any one about the details of the crime, except to his lawyer, Mr. Howells, who also refuses to speak about it. This excites unfavorable comment, and the relations of the lovers become strained because of the suspicion aroused by Morton's conduct. A dark-featured Frenchman named Pierre Le Clerc, from Martinique, West Indies, calls on Morton, who declines to see him, but when Le Clerc sends him a note he is at once admitted. After this Le Clerc has frequent interviews with Morton, at which the latter takes care that the lawyer shall not be present. Claude suspects that Le Clerc is in possession of the facts concerning Tyler's murder, and he has high words with his uncle about his reticence regarding it. His suspicion is confirmed when he discovers that Le Clerc had an interview with Hallie and that his rival for Hallie's hand, Ambrose Fletcher, is on terms of intimacy with Le Clerc. It is ascertained that Le Clerc had a quarrel with Morton and had stated that he would return to Martinique. Claude believes his uncle to be innocent of wrongdoing and Le Clerc to be a villain. When he goes to his uncle's residence, he finds him murdered in his study. He is placed under surveillance, but is led unwittingly out of the way of the detectives by his friend, Tom Coleman. Words spoken by Claude in anger at his uncle's reticence are repeated at the inquest with telling effect by his enemy, Fletcher, and the verdict of the jury declares him to be the murderer. Under pretense of friendship, Fletcher induces Hallie to show him a letter written to her by Claude in which he threatened to do something desperate if the barrier to their marriage by his uncle's silence was not removed. (Claude had in mind going to California with Coleman in making this threat.) Fletcher, seeing the importance of this letter as evidence against Claude, refuses to give it back to Hallie when she, suspecting his purpose, demands its return. While they are contending for possession of the letter, Hallie shouting for help, a carriage stops in front of the house and two bearded men rush into the room and one of them knocks Fletcher down. Hallie recognizes Claude in his disguise and falls fainting into his his arms. Claude and Tom Coleman make their way to a brig, *en route* for California. Tom sees Le Clerc going toward a West India vessel. . . Mr. Howells is dissatisfied with the District Attorney's conduct of the case, and he takes mysterious precautions in searching Morton's papers. . . When the brig reaches Central America, Tom is sure that an officer in search of Claude is on board a schooner which arrived a few hours later, and they hasten to depart.

Le Clerc was a passenger on the schooner. On their way across country, the two friends become the guests of General Cartabona, commandant of Castillo Viejo. Doña Teresa Fredrico, who is on a visit to the Castillo, falls into the hands of brigands, and Claude and Tom rescue her. Tom falls in love with Teresa, whose father is a rich merchant of Granada. A large band of brigands is approaching the Castillo, and the leader, named Somoza, demands the surrender of Doña Teresa and the two young Americans. Cartabona refuses, and a fight is imminent.]

CHAPTER XIII.

DON FREDRICO'S STORY.

THERE was some demonstration on the part of the brigands, or insurrectionists, as they called themselves. They advanced to the number of about two hundred to within long musket range, and a few shots were exchanged between them and the castle. Then they fell back.

While they were retreating, Tom, looking through a field-glass, cried:

"Claude, Claude! Look, look at that man!" and he handed the glass to him. "Look quick, while his face is toward you!"

"Who is it?" asked Claude, seizing the glass and adjusting it to his eye.

"Look at the man standing on the point of rocks. He is alone, and has his glass fixed on us."

"I see him now, but he has his back turned toward me. He is going away. I can't see his face. Who is he?"

"He is out of sight now," Tom sighed, as the man who had excited his interest disappeared around a point on the cliff.

"Who is he?" asked Claude.

Tom went to Claude's side and whispered:

"I swear, so help me Heaven, that man is Pierre Le Clerc, the Frenchman from Martinique."

What had passed between the two Americans was not, in the general excitement that prevailed, observed by the others. Claude went to General Cartabona, who had been watching the retreat through his glass.

"Did you notice the man standing alone on that point of rocks?" the General asked, as he reached him.

"I did, General, but I did not get a good look at his face."

"I did."

"Did you recognize him?"

"Yes; it was Somoza, the brigand and insurrectionist, without any mistake."

As Claude walked away from the General, he thought:

"Can it be possible that even in my flight I am only thickening the veil of mystery about my own sad life?"

That evening, a fleet of bongos came from Granada for the daughter of Senor Fredrico. He had learned that the castle was in danger, and sent a number of armed men to bring his daughter home.

Somoza, mistaking the guard for reinforcements to the castle, abandoned the siege that night, and left the vicinity of Castillo Viejo. Next morning Dona Teresa bade all her friends adieu, and, seated under the *chopa* of an elegantly painted bongo, surrounded by brave and faithful followers, took her departure.

Tom was eager to accompany the fleet, but Pedro had discovered another injury to *La Granadina*, and two days more were passed in anxious waiting at the old castle which Lord Nelson had once assisted in capturing. While they were in waiting at the castle a rumor reached them that Somoza headed a great uprising in the interior, and with a vast army intended to lay siege to the city of Granada.

Tom Coleman's anxiety to reach Granada increased, and when the bongo was repaired they hurried on, past historic towns and ruins. On every side was a wealth of beauty and grandeur. In places they found the rapids so swift and the current so strong that the ascent was difficult.

Lake Nicaragua was at last reached, and sails were hoisted. A midnight storm, danger of shipwreck, and being drenched to the skin from sudden showers, were among the discomforts from which they suffered. But at last, passing through the fairy "Corales," they came to the little island of Cubi, with its white beach and old castle; while beyond a belt of woods, on higher ground, rose the towers of Granada. Little of the town save the red tiled roofs of the houses could be seen. At the island of Cubi they found several huts and a number of boats drawn into little nooks between the rocks, while beneath the trees were clusters of women and children, and here and there groups of men engaged in playing some noisy game with cards.

As they came into shore they heard the boom of cannon in the direction of Granada, and Pedro declared that Somoza had already begun the bombardment of the city.

The excitement spread to the island, and for awhile interfered with the amusements of the islanders. The fusilade ended with one or two more cannon-shot, while a white cloud rose slowly above the city. For a time the islanders watched the city with evident anxiety, but Pedro, after listening awhile, concluded it was only a *fiesta*, and what they supposed the discharge of cannon was only the explosion of fireworks.

Fully satisfied on this point, they sailed to Granada, cast anchor near the shore, and were carried to land on the shoulders of the *marineros*. Pedro slipped off his clothes, and holding them above his head, went ashore, in ecstatic spirits, to find the town standing and safe. He dressed with great expedition, and with much dignity put himself in advance of the Americans to escort them to the town.

The ascent was by terraces, the faces of which were paved with stone and guarded by masonry to protect them from the wasting action of the rains. Palm, plantain, orange and other trees lined the road on either side, shut in by hedges composed of a species of cactus bearing brilliant-red flowers. They met troops of laughing girls of every shade and complexion from pure white to ebon black, fancifully attired, with water-jars on their heads, going to the lake for water. They were straight as arrows and had an infinite fund of animal spirits. Most of them gave the strangers shy glances, half of curiosity and half of mischief, while others, more bold, turning fully around, gayly exexclaimed:

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"*Adios, caballereros!*"

Tom responded with what little Spanish he had picked up: "*Adios, mi alma!*" which made them scream with laughter.

Just then a party of soldiers defiled across the street in front of the Americans. They were barefooted and wore white pantaloons and jackets, with curious little black caps, banded with metal, and having little, round, red cockades stuck saucily in front. A dashing young officer rode at their head, who lifted his hat gracefully to the strangers. Tom and Claude glanced after them down the street, and saw that sentinels were stationed at the corners but two squares distant, and that the streets near the plaza were barricaded with timbers and adobes, with a single embrasure in the center, through which cannon looked grimly toward them.

Soldiers were stationed on the walls of the convent and towers of the parochial church. It was evident that the government and military were alarmed at the threat of Somoza, and were fully on the alert, prepared for an assault.

The home of Don Fredrico was reached at last. He had learned of the intended visit of the Americans from his daughter, and was exceedingly glad to meet the gallant strangers from the North who had saved his child. The house of the don was a large adobe affair with a court in the center, after the fashion of houses in Granada. In the court was a broad corridor, completely surrounding it, and in the center grew a number of orange, marañon and other fruit trees, fragrant bushes and clumps of flowers. On one side was the store, filled with bales and boxes, and in front of it were large scales for weighing commodities, while the *sala*, dining and private rooms occupied the remaining two sides of the court.

Don Fredrico received his guests with all the warmth of a Southerner, and apartments in his spacious house were set apart for them. Don Fredrico was born and educated in Jamaica, but had resided thirty years in Granada, where he had married, become a citizen and accumulated a colossal fortune. Possessing the respect and confidence of all parties, he passed safely through the many revolutions and troubles to which Nicaragua had been subjected.

The Americans were ushered into the private office of the don, in which were two or three movable desks, and a pale young man who acted as his private secretary. The merchant and his secretary both spoke English quite fluently.

"I am pleased to meet you, and welcome you to my home," the don declared, after shaking the hands of both for several moments. "I have learned how you saved my daughter's life, and I owe you a greater debt than I can ever repay." The dark eyes of the Spaniard became moist. "But you are young men, and not fathers, so you cannot appreciate a father's emotions as I can."

"I presume she would only have been held for ransom, if she had been captured," Claude ventured to remark.

"Perhaps; but worlds would not induce me to trust my child for one moment in the power of Somoza. For years he has been my personal enemy. He is vigilant, cunning, daring and unscrupulous. He stoops at nothing, and his influence in Central America, I am sorry to say, is great. Unscrupulous politicians court his friendship for the basest of purposes."

"Is that the secret of his power?"

"In a great measure it is."

Tom sighed and looked lonesome until he found the señorita, and then an instantaneous change came over his manner. Ten minutes later they were strolling in the garden, talking just such nonsense as might be expected of a pair of lovers.

The old don, watching them from the open window for a few moments, turned to Claude and asked:

"How long have you known this friend of yours?"

"Since boyhood."

The merchant was silent for a moment, then fixing his piercing eyes on Claude, said:

"You look like an honorable man, Mr. Perkins."

"I hope, sir, that you may never have occasion to change your opinion of me," Claude answered, though his conscience smote him at that moment, when he remembered that he was living out a deception and actually going under an assumed name.

"Tell me truly, then: is he as honest as his face would indicate?"

"I assure you, Don Fredrico, that Tom Coleman is an honest, upright man. He is a thorough man, every inch of him, and a credit to his friends."

"His family?"

With a smile, Claude answered:

"In North America, we take little note of birth. His parents were honorable. They left Tom little save good health and a good name. He worked his way through college, and is now on his way to California to make his fortune."

With a sigh the don answered:

"Many go to seek fortunes, and few find them."

"We hope to be among the lucky number."

Nothing more was said of Tom for some time. Other matters of an exciting nature demanded the attention of all, save Tom and Teresa, who were too much absorbed in each other's society to take notice of the trump of Gabriel. The air was full of alarming rumors about Somoza's insurrection. His forces were, of course, greatly exaggerated. Honduras and Guatemala were said to be backing him with men, arms and funds. These rumors proved to be false. It is doubtful if Somoza ever had over three hundred followers at any one time, if so many. Though in history he is called an insurrectionist, he was really a robber.

For three or four days the ancient city of Granada was filled with alarm; but when a week had passed, and the bandit had not made his appearance, all fears began to subside. Some of the troops of the government met him in the mountains, and after a sharp engagement, put him to rout, leaving twenty dead on the field.

"Do you know this Somoza?" Claude asked the don, one evening when they were sitting alone in the study of the latter.

"Yes, I have known him personally for years."

"Is he an educated man?"

"He is educated and polished. If you met him you would be impressed with the idea that he was a gentleman."

"Is he tall?"

"Yes."

"Dark?"

"Very dark for a pure Spaniard, which he claims to be—yet I doubt it."

"How many languages does he speak?" Claude asked, after several moments' silence.

"Spanish, French, English, Italian and one or two Indian tongues."

"Was he ever in Martinique?" Claude asked, very thoughtfully.

"I have heard that he lived there for several years."

"Has he ever been to the United States?"

"I think not; yet he possibly may have gone there without my knowledge, though I never heard of his making such a visit." Then the don added that they had not missed him long out of Central America, where he had made himself so odious.

"How has he made himself so odious?" Claude asked.

"He waylays travellers in the mountains and robs and murders them. The returning Californians usually suffer most from him. It is thought that in that manner he has taken thousands of ounces of gold from them. With us he adopts the Italian brigand plan of operation. He usually takes a captive to his mountain rendezvous, and holds him or her for a heavy ransom."

After discussing Somoza for some time, Claude asked:

"Did you ever know a New York merchant named Robert Morton?"

"I know him well," the don answered. He had not heard of Mr. Morton's death. "He is my friend and brother, and we have had much dealing."

"I have heard he was an honorable man."

"My dealings of fifteen years prove it."

"You saw him when he was last in Nicaragua?"

"On his return from California?"

"Yes."

"I did. He and Mr. Tyler were at my house before starting across the country."

"Were they not attacked by robbers or Indians?"

"It was so reported."

"And Mr. Tyler killed?"

"That is what I was told, but I have since heard it denied."

"What?" cried Claude, in amazement.

"I don't know that any reliance can be put in the story, senor, but it is said that one of the band of robbers who attacked the returning Californians was badly wounded and left in the woods for dead. A priest found him before he died, and took his confession, and he said that one of the men supposed to have been killed in the fight was only wounded, taken away to the mountains and held for ransom."

"If this is true," Claude thought, "Hallie's father may yet be alive. But it cannot be true. Were he alive and held for ransom, he would have written to some of his friends for the money." Then he asked the merchant: "Did the wounded man know that the person who survived the conflict was Tyler?"

"No; it is only a surmise of my own."

"I think it can hardly be Mr. Tyler, or his friends would have been notified, and the ransom raised for him."

"Did you know Mr. Tyler?"

"I have heard of him."

"Has he wealthy relatives in New York?"

"He has no wealthy relatives anywhere. He failed in the mercantile business and went to California. We learned that he had amassed a fortune in gold."

"So he had. It was counted by him, Mr. Morton and myself in this very room. There was about fifty thousand dollars' worth of dust, besides letters of credit to twice as much."

"Letters of credit!" cried Claude, starting and staring at the narrator, while a dark suspicion flashed across his mind. "What became of those letters of credit?"

"Were taken with the gold, I suppose," the merchant answered.

"If they took his gold and letters of credit, why should they hold him for ransom?" Claude asked.

"I have no faith in the story whatever," the don answered. "I wish Mr. Tyler was living, but he is not."

Claude thought if there were letters of credit on bankers in San Francisco, the money might possibly be obtained for Hallie. But how was he to claim it? He dared not own his name, or even admit that he knew her, for it would lead to his detection.

"You conversed with Mr. Tyler while here?" Claude asked.

"Quite freely. His conversation was mostly about his daughter, who seemed to be the chief subject on his mind. He talked of her almost continually—said he had left her a little child and was returning to find her a young lady, with an honorable lover, whom she would wed soon after his return, and that the gold he had dug from the mines would make her rich and happy. Then they went away, and next I received a letter from Mr. Morton, saying all had been robbed and murdered save himself. It made me so sad that I wept for several days."

"How many were in their party?"

"They were six in all. There were four Californians, besides Mr. Morton and Tyler."

Claude asked a few more questions, but could gain no more information from the merchant.

When he and Tom were alone, he told him what he had learned, and said:

"If I had any assurance that Hallie's father was alive in these mountains, I woudl spend my life hunting for him."

"Oh, pshaw, Claude! It's nonsense. If any one did escape at all, it was one of those four Californians. It was impossible that Mr. Tyler could have escaped. He would have written home about it."

"I suppose you are correct. But, Tom, he says there were letters of credit in his possession. What do you think of them?"

"If the robbers got them, I'll warrant they have been drawn out before this. It is all a perplexing mystery; but I'll bet my head for a football, when you come to solve it all, this Somoza and Pierre Le Clerc are one. Now Le Clerc did not sail two weeks before your uncle's death, as was supposed, but two days after, and he may have been the murderer."

"Even admitting that Somoza and Le Clerc are one, what motive would he have had for killing my poor uncle?"

"I give it up. I can't figure it out. So go to bed. I'm going out to listen to Teresa sing."

Claude tossed long on his uneasy couch before he went to sleep to dream of Somoza, Hallie and the Dark Stranger.

CHAPTER XIV.

A NARROW ESCAPE FROM THE DARK STRANGER.

Claude Morton saw but little of Tom, who was almost constantly with Dona Teresa. War's alarms and all the threats of brigands and insurrectionists could not check lovemaking. If Claude at times felt inclined to blame Tom, he thought of Hallie, from whom fate had so cruelly torn him, and was willing to forgive his folly. But Claude was not wholly deserted in this strange city. Don Martin Fredrico and his amiable wife, a beautiful senora of thirty-five, made his stay at their home as pleasant as possible.

The don introduced Claude to the commandant of the plaza, Colonel Trinidad Salazar, who one day invited the young American to take a ride with him about the city and its environs. Claude consented, and, mounted on fiery little horses, they started on the tour of inspection.

Except the church of La Mercedes and the convent of San Francisco, there were few buildings remarkable or imposing. The parochial church on the plaza was very ancient and celebrated as containing the bones of several of the first bishops of Nicaragua, which was established as a diocese as early as 1532. The interior was far from imposing. It had some paintings, too ancient to be distinguished, with some indifferent prints of saints and scenes in the life of Christ and the apostles. From the grand plaza they rode through narrow streets, between long rows of substantial houses, in the direction of the municipality of Jalteva. Dashing up a broad causeway, with heavy flanking walls, surmounted by urns, they came at once into a second grand plaza. Here the buildings were of the poorer class and more scattered; huts of canes, alternating with adobe houses and open lots of ground. The plaza was deserted, and as they rode along the whole quarter seemed depopulated. On inquiry, Claude learned that this municipality was the stronghold of the "Calandracas," and hereditarily jealous of the city proper. This hostility had led to a recent collision, in which the disaffected party suffered defeat. Either from fear or with the intention of going to the support of Somoza, the majority of the people fled to the fields. Those who remained, with scarcely an exception, moved, for greater safety, within the city. The silence and desolation which reigned within this deserted quarter was a mournful commentary on partisan feuds. A few dogs and unclaimed cattle wandered despondingly amongst the houses, as if in search of their masters; but beyond these there were no signs of life.

Passing the Jalteva, they came into a broad open road leading to Leon, and soon reached a square, compact building, which Claude learned was an arsenal. It was surrounded by a high wall, and at the corners were erected towers, looped for musketry, each containing a guard of soldiers. A cannon looked morosely through the open gateway, around which was a company of lancers, just returning from some expedition. Their lances, to each of which was hung a little red streamer, flashed in the sun as they fell into line on the approach of the commandant; while the guards, on the tap of the drum, leaped to their feet and presented arms.

Beyond the arsenal was a narrow ravine, with absolutely precipitous walls, worn by the rains. It extended on three sides of the city, and only two places were then passable.

From the arsenal, Claude and his companion turned to the left and followed a broad, well-beaten path, which wound beneath a complete archway of trees, vines and flowers in the direction of Campo Santo, the burial place of the city.

On the way, the ruins of an old hacienda struck the romantic fancy of Claude Morton, and he asked the Colonel if there was not a history connected with it.

"It is very ancient, senor," the Colonel answered, "and the story told of it is almost forgotten."

"Relate the story to me?" said Claude.

The Colonel then told him a romantic story of an old cavalier from Castile who, wandering to the new world, built the ancient hacienda, famous in its day for the gay cavaliers and fair ladies who thronged its halls. The old cavalier had a beautiful daughter who fell in love with a native cazique, a man of great fame and power among his people. The Castilian forbade the cazique coming to the hacienda, and locked his daughter in her room. The cazique, who was as brave as he was handsome, one night by means of a rope ladder climbed to her balcony. He had just seized the object of his love in his arms, and both were descending the ladder, when the father rushed upon them, and, leaning from the window, with his sword cut the rope ladder from the roof above, and both fell upon the rocks and were crushed to death. Ever after the hacienda was haunted by the spirits of the lovers, and no one had ever dared to live in it. The furniture, the Colonel said, was still in the building, though falling to ruins, and the rare old paintings on the walls were so darkened by time that one could hardly discern them.

"It is a romantic place, and I must visit it," said Claude.

The Colonel shrugged his shoulders, crossed himself, and shook his head. The senor might go if he wished, but the commandant had business which demanded his attention elsewhere. The sun had passed the meridian when they drew rein on a slight elevation, and gazed down upon the ruin. Claude felt a strange desire to visit the quaint old place, and having none of the Colonel's superstition, he told the commandant that he would join him in an hour at the arsenal, and rode down to the building. He dismounted in the old court, in which cactus and weeds grew from the crevices in the stone with which the court was paved, and throwing the reins over a stone pillar, entered the ruin.

The entrance was by a great double door, which was swinging loosely on rusty hinges. He found himself in a dark corridor, with apartments on either side. He entered one of these apartments, which was large, with a much higher ceiling than is usually found in that country. There was any amount of soiled tapestry, broken furniture, and indications of ruin everywhere.

At last he came to a stairway leading to the apartments above. He seated himself on a broken column of stone which lay on the stone floor, and was trying to decipher an ancient painting, when a noise on the stairway attracted his attention, and turning his eyes in that direction, he saw a man looking at him from the first landing, as he leaned over the baluster. He was a tall man, with dark, sinister features, cruel black eyes, mustache and high, receding forehead.

Claude started from the column on which he had been sitting, and the man said, in splendid English:

"Don't be alarmed, Monsieur Morton."

His voice was familiar, and as he descended to where the light from the deep embrasured window fell on his face, Claude recognized him.

"Le Clerc, from Martinique!" he cried, laying his hand on the butt of his revolver.

"Hold, Claude Morton, don't attempt that!" said the dark stranger. "I am not alone."

From behind two columns that supported the roof two dark, brigandish-looking fellows with short guns appeared. Their fingers were on the locks, and there was a murderous look in their eyes.

"Don't attempt to draw that weapon, or you will be shot, Claude Morton. Let us sit down and talk sensibly. Maybe we can come to terms."

For a moment, utterly bewildered, Claude gazed at the dark stranger. At last he stammered:

"So you are here, Monsieur Le Clerc. You are not a Martinique merchant, as you professed to be, but Somoza, the Nicaraguan brigand."

"You are quick to form conclusions; but let us not talk of myself, but yourself. You are wanted in New York."

"For a crime you yourself probably committed."

The dark stranger smiled, showing his ferocious white teeth, and coolly seating himself on a broken column, lighted a cigar, while he replied:

"Why should I murder your uncle? What motive could I have had?"

"I know not, nor do I know what motives impelled you to go to New York, change your name and hold mysterious interviews with my uncle."

"All things are a mystery until understood. But to return to yourself. You were accused of murder and fled from New York, which will be construed as evidence of guilt against you. A reward has been offered for you, dead or alive, and I have it within my power to earn that reward."

"You, brigand, thief and insurrectionist that you are? Why, there is a reward offered for you in this country."

"I am not losing any sleep over it. I admit that nothing would give Don Martin Fredrico more pleasure than to see me hung, yet I have no fear of it."

"How can you escape this hacienda?" asked Claude, in amazement, for he knew that no one could pass to and from the hacienda without being seen by some of the guards. The dark stranger laughed.

"The fools can't hinder my going and coming at will. I can pass their sleepy sentries unseen."

The hacienda had been chosen by the robber for a post of observation, because it was in such a position that its dome afforded an extended view. As soon as it was dark, with a slight disguise, he could go anywhere he wished and note the strong and weak places of the city's defenses.

But Somoza was not contemplating an assault on the city so much as an attack on the house of Don Martin Fredrico, in which it was his design to carry off the senorita and plunder the money vaults of the merchant. He knew that none of the superstitious Granadians would venture near the hacienda; but he had not calculated on the visit of the Americans. Claude was brave as a lion, and feared the brigands as little as he did the reputed ghosts that haunted the hacienda. In the hope of gaining some information from the bandit chief, he asked:

"What are you doing here within the lines of your enemies?"

Again the sinister face of the dark stranger was lighted with a smile, as he answered:

"Let us not talk of my intentions, but your own."

"My intentions cannot concern you."

"They do. You are worth five thousand dollars to the man who returns you to the New York hangman, but I can make you worth more to me."

"How?"

"Now you are growing sensible, Claude. There is a subterranean passage from this ruin to the forest beyond the fortifications. I could take you with me to that thicket where one hundred of my men are waiting, and easily take you to Greytown, where some New York detectives are waiting for you."

"How about yourself?"

"My dear sir, they have nothing to do with me. I am only an insurrectionist with them. I could turn you over and get a good share of the money for doing so, but that is not my intention. I can put you to a better use."

"How?"

"You are stopping at the house of Don Martin Fredrico. If you will allow me to accompany you to the house in disguise this evening, introduce me to the don as your friend, and then you and your friend leave the house and go a mile from it, you are not only free and your life spared, but you shall have a thousand doubloons."

"So it is your design to enter the house of our friend and rob or perhaps murder him?"

"Draw your own conclusion. Will you accept my generous offer?"

"No."

"Then you will go with us?"

"I will not."

"Beware—"

He struck his foot on the stone floor, and his two followers leaped forward, one with a cord and the other with a pistol in his hand. Quick as thought, Claude Morton snatched his revolver from his belt and fired. The man with the pistol fell, and he grappled with the other and both went rolling on the floor. The American had his foe under him and his fingers about his throat.

Somoza sprang to the rescue of his companion, and raised his long, keen dagger to plunge it into Claude's back, when a tall man in the robes of a priest suddenly appeared from some secret apartment of the ruin, and, seizing the uplifted arm of Somoza, said:

"Refrain, my son, and fly for your life. The soldiers are coming."

Claude received a blow on the head which stunned him, and the next moment he was sitting alone on the floor, pressing his hand to his injured head, when the commandant and his body-guard entered the door.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ROBBERS ATTACK THE BONGO.

Colonel Salazar, the Commandant of the Plaza, with his body-guard, hearing the pistol-shot in the hacienda, made a charge on it. Claude's absence had excited some alarm, and they were on their way to the ruin when the shot was fired. Before they reached it, the robbers had succeeded in making their escape, taking their dead comrade with them.

"Senor, what has happened?" asked the commandant. Claude told him all, and could hardly convince the Colonel that Somoza was in their midst. Had not the pool of blood on the tiling corroborated Claude's story they would have thought him dreaming.

A search was made for the brigand chief, but in vain. Claude remembered having heard something of an underground outlet, and a search was made for it. It was found, and drops of blood showed where the dead man had been carried through it.

The soldiers followed it through to the outlet in the thicket. Here they found the banditti, and a sharp fight followed. The soldiers were reinforced, and Somoza came near being captured. Half of his men were taken or slain, and with the remainder he fled to the mountains.

A week passed and nothing more was seen of the brigand chief. His insurrection was a decided failure, and his adherents everywhere were offering to surrender if a pardon was granted them.

The fears entertained by the people of Granada, when Claude and Tom reached the city, were no longer felt. The garrison became less alert, and fandangoes, bull-fights and other amusements were resumed.

Through all the week of excitement Tom Coleman had been oblivious to everything save the charms of Dona Teresa. At last he plucked up courage to mention the matter to her father and ask his consent to their union. The merchant, after a moment's thoughtful silence, said:

"You are both young enough to wait two or three years and see if you really mean it. As you say you are poor, but are going to California to make a fortune, then wait until the fortune is made. Three thousand dollars will set you up in business in Granada, and when you come back with that sum you can have my consent."

Tom did not like the terms, but they were the best he could get, so he received his sentence about as cheerfully as a convict would receive two years when the law might make it ten. He gained permission from the don to correspond with Dona Teresa.

Pedro reported *La Granadina* as ready to sail, but the Americans resolved to remain three days longer, until the arrival of General Munos from Leon. His arrival was to be celebrated by a grand ball or fandango on the plaza. Senorita Teresa Fredrico was very anxious that her lover should meet the General, whom she declared the most polished man in the country. He would bring his military band, and there would be no end to the music in the plaza and the *tertúlias* and balls afterward.

Between baths in the lake at early dawn, delicious siestas in hammocks at noon, rides on the beach in the evening, dinners, visits, and listening entranced to the voice of his adored Teresa as she sang to the soft accompaniment of the guitar or piano, the time passed all too quickly for Tom.

To Claude it was different. His sad life was blighted and no promise of merriment could even arouse a momentary interest in it, and all the sunbeams of joy could not throw a ray on his darkened soul. He did not care to stay to the festivities, and was not anxious to go. On the night of the *grande bal mask* he went to *La Granadina* to see that all was in readiness for the start, as it was their intention to sail for San Juan Del Sur next day.

Early the following day, Claude bade the don and his family adieu, and with his gun in one hand and his poncho on his other arm, he started for the lake, though he little expected to find Pedro and his crew ready. When he reached the bongo, not a sailor had appeared, and it was noon before the first man showed his countenance at the lake.

Tom, who was not at all anxious to sail, did not put in an appearance until long after the sun had passed the meridian. Then he looked very sad, and heaved sighs and cast so many glances in the direction of Don Martin's residence that Claude feared he would break away and run back.

But at last they got him on board and sailed away. They had been an hour on the lake before Tom spoke a word, though he had been heaving an abundance of tremendous sighs.

"Claude, she is a wonderful girl."

Lovers usually think their adored ones wonderful, and take delight in telling others their opinions.

"Yes—she is very beautiful," Claude admitted in an indifferent sort of a way.

"Claude, I am sorry that I treated your love for Hallie so lightly. The fact is, I never knew anything about the genuine article before."

Claude smiled sadly and answered:

"No one knows the joys and pangs of love until he has experienced them."

"You have not given up Hallie, have you, Claude?"

"I have little hope, Tom. What can there be in store for me, anyway? I see nothing but darkness and despair."

"Oh, Claude, cheer up! Something may yet come out of all this mystery."

"One discovery has been made, Tom. Somoza and Le Clerc from Martinique are one."

"So you admit now that it was the dark stranger I saw on the dock in New York?"

"It must have been."

"And it was he whom I saw at San Juan?"

"I admit it."

"And at Castillo Viejo?"

"I suppose you are correct. At any rate he is in Nicaragua."

"By the way, Claude, I heard something about him just before I left."

"What was it?"

"Just before I left, the don took me aside, so Teresa could not hear, and told me that Somoza had been seen on the lake in an armed bongo. He said that we should take care not to meet him."

"I have no desire to meet him, Tom, for the fellow has a special grudge against me."

"For killing his man in the hacienda?"

"No. He cares little for the lives of his men. But I refused to aid him in robbing Don Martin. This seems to be the pet notion of his life."

Tom was silent for a moment, and then said:

"Claude, we'll make it warm for them if they should overhaul us. We have our rifles, two good shotguns and revolvers, while Pedro and his men are armed with scopats and pistols."

"I don't think they will fight."

"They will have to. We will make them," said Tom.

Then Tom got out the guns, examined them and loaded them carefully. The double-barreled shotguns he loaded with buckshot. They were formidable weapons at short range. Pedro and his crew were a little more vigilant than usual. They had pistols stuck in their belts and short guns at their sides. They conversed in a low, earnest manner, and it was evident that they were greatly excited about something.

When night came, Claude and Tom lay under the *chopa* and slept. The wind was fair, and the sail being spread, the bongo was gliding easily over the water. There was not a cloud in the sky, and the stars and a full moon made it almost as light as day.

As there was no need of oars, they were shipped, and with all sail spread they glided over the lake. All the *marineros*, save enough to man the bongo, were asleep.

Claude was dreaming of Hallie, and Tom of Teresa, when they were suddenly awakened by loud cries. Pedro, who, between threats and oaths, was calling on all the saints to preserve him, was pounding on the low roof of the *chopa* and shouting, in bad English:

"Americanos! Yankees! Californias!"

"What in thunder has broke loose now?" roared Tom, snatching his rifle and starting from under the *chopa*. Claude followed his example, and an object calculated to strike alarm to their breasts met their view.

A large boat, with a swivel in the bow, and filled with armed men, was bearing down upon them, and two other boats were not a mile away. Pedro was dumb with dread, and his crew were in a like plight, their teeth chattering with alarm. Claude and Tom did not at first pay any attention to the cowardly boatmen, for their whole attention was taken up with the approaching boat.

Standing by the side of the mast, with his eagle eye fixed on *La Granadina*, was a tall, graceful man, with a feather in his hat, a red, Spanish cloak hanging over one shoulder, a brace of naked pistols stuck in his belt, and a drawn sword in his hand, the point of which rested on the rowers' seat at his side. Both recognized in this pirate chief the dark stranger, Le Clerc from Martinique—Somoza, the robber and insurrectionist. No buccaneer of the Spanish main ever looked more daring than he.

Claude and Tom were stirred with similar emotions. Claude thought of his murdered uncle, Hallie's father and his blasted life, and, with teeth set in deadly hate, he cocked his gun. Tom thought of Teresa, her father and his gold, all in danger from the man before him, and raised the hammer of his rifle. Both guns were leveled instinctively, and almost at the same moment.

Crack! Crack!

Both reports rang out sharp and keen over the water at almost the same moment of time. Distance on the moonlit water is deceiving, and though both Claude and Tom were good shots, they missed the tall brigand chief; but their bullets struck the man in the bow and he fell into the river.

"Hand me a shotgun, Tom, and load both of these," said Claude, coolly.

Tom gave him one of the double-barreled shotguns, and proceeded to reload the rifles. Pedro and his sailors were howling and begging for mercy, until Tom began to belabor them with a fishing-rod, and made them seize their scopats and prepare to fight. He swore he would kill any one who attempted to shrink from duty.

Claude all the while stood with one foot on the rowers' seat, with cocked gun, and never took his eyes off the brigand's boat. Somoza ordered some of his men to fire the swivel in the bow, and half a dozen soon gathered about it for that purpose, when Claude sent a load of buckshot whistling among them, wounding two and driving the others away. They were cursed and ordered back by their chief.

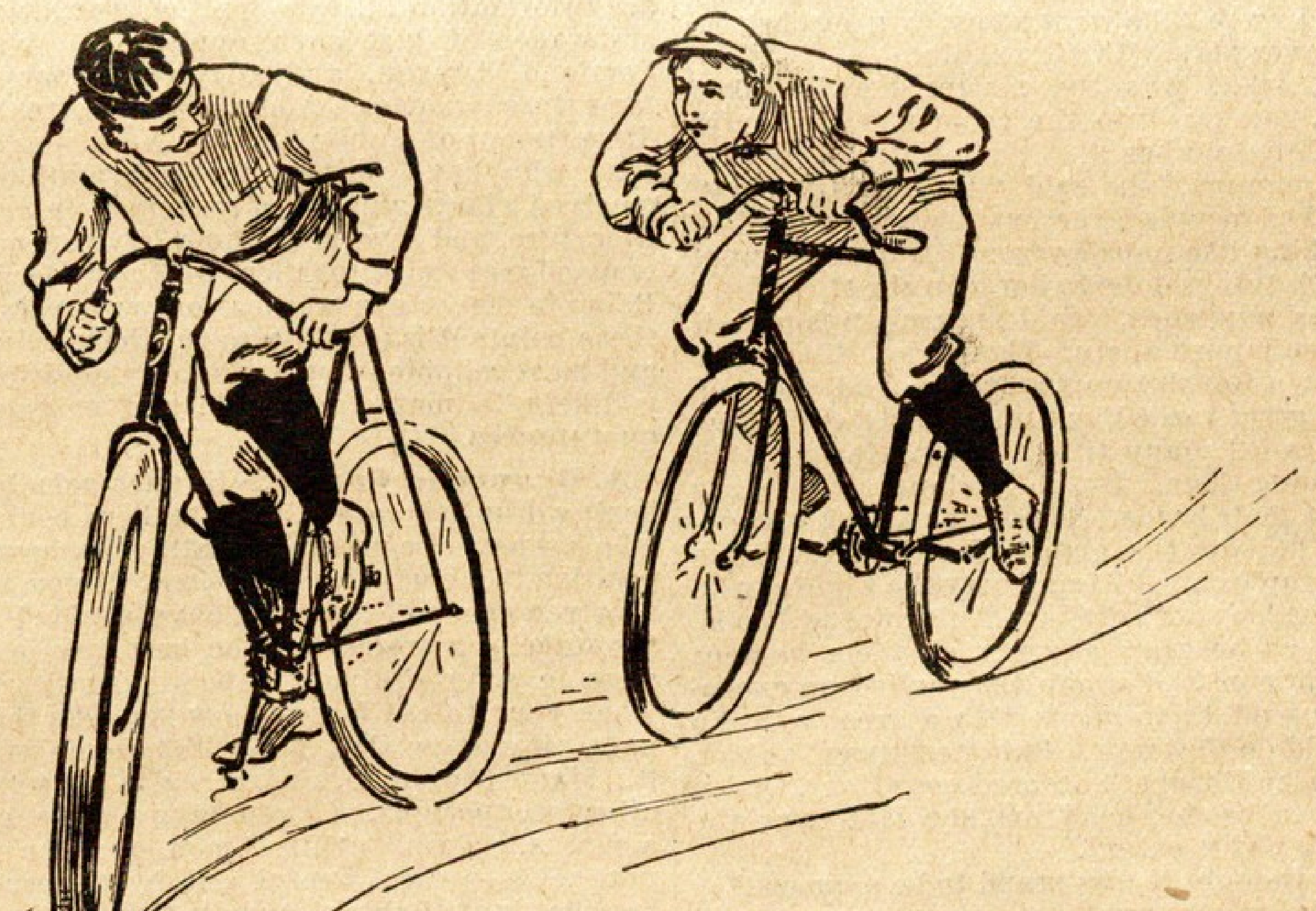
Again they rushed to the swivel, when a second charge of buckshot wounded three more, one fatally. Somoza, in a rage, ordered the boat to bear down upon the bongo. Claude realized what their intentions were, and reloading the shotgun, ordered Pedro and his *marineros* to seize their guns and defend themselves.

"If one of you shrinks from your duty," roared Tom, "I will blow your brains out."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 8.]

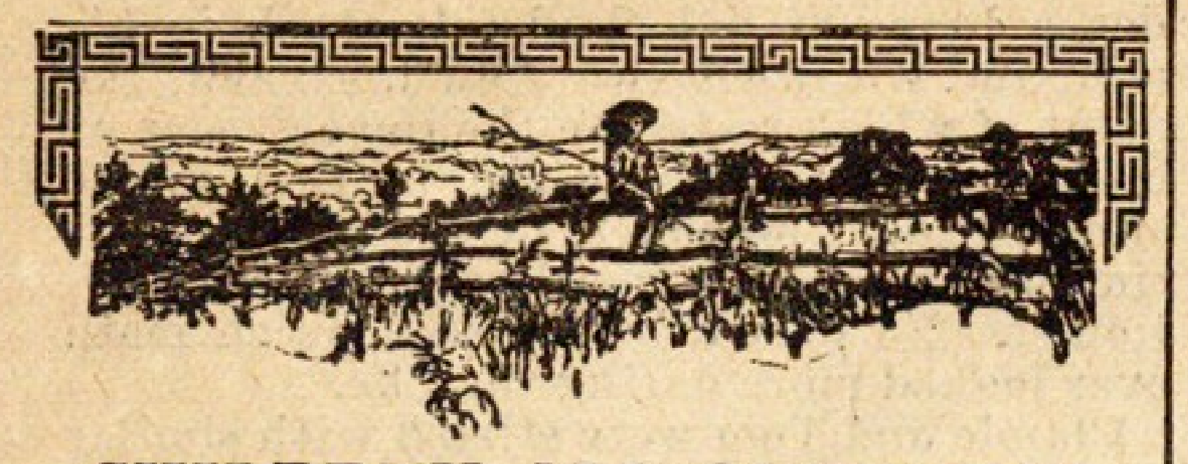
◆

—The pressure per square inch upon the body of every animal that lives at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean is about twenty-five times greater than the pressure that will drive a railway train.



Beaten by Blood.

"Blood will tell," either in horse or man. Good blood has backbone in it; and backbone in the blood is the staying quality that triumphs in so many a race. Do you want to put backbone in your blood? Use Ayer's Sarsaparilla. It nourishes the blood and strengthens the body. It makes the weak strong. It makes the stayers and winners of the world.



CHILDREN ALL OVER THE WORLD.

Queen Isabella.

Tilly has a doll that was bought for her at a fair. The doll is called Queen Isabella. She is dresed in satin and has imitation diamonds in her ears and at her neck, and on her head is a crown with very large so-called jewels in it; in her hand she carries a scepter, and she has a throne to sit on instead of a chair.

Cousin Jack came to visit Tilly one day, and as soon as he saw the doll he took a great liking to it.

"That's a doll worth having," he said. "You can play with her. She's a queen, isn't she?"

"Yes," said Tilly. "She is Queen Isabella."

"Let's play Columbus, then," said Jack. "I learned about that in school last week. Columbus wanted to discover America. Well, he didn't know about America, but he knew that the world was round like an orange, and if only anybody would give him ships and money, he said he'd go and find out. Nobody would. They thought it was silly. But Queen Isabella, of Spain, sold her jewels and gave him what she got for them; and he came and discovered America. Let her be Queen Isabella, and I'll be Columbus, and you be the King of Spain, and I'll show you how to do it. Little Bob and Billy and baby will be the rest of the court."

Tilly was delighted, and they played Columbus at the Court of Isabella until they were tired. Then Jack proposed to play French Revolution, and fix up a guillotine out of uncle's old razors, and have the doll-queen for Marie Antoinette, and all the other dolls for great ladies.

"We'll have red caps on and be the populace," said Jack, "and cut their heads off. And they'll roll into your knitting basket, and I'll hold them up by the hair."

"You'll only *play* cut them off?" said Tilly, trembling.

"No," said Jack, "really, or there'd be no fun. I'll stick the heads on again with glue."

At this, Tilly began to scream, and gathered her dolls together and hovered them as a hen does her chickens.

"Don't be silly," said Jack. "You cannot play if you don't go into it with some spirit."

"I don't want to play such things," said Tilly. "Besides it wouldn't be playing true. Nobody can hurt kings and queens; other people have to mind them, and nobody ever cut a queen's head off. So there now."

"Where did you ever hear anything about them?" asked Jack.

"In my fairy-tale books," said Tilly. "Princesses' mothers are queens. I'd like to see any one do anything they didn't like."

"What sillies girls are," said Jack. "It would be nice fun to guillotine those dolls."

He made a grab at Queen Isabella, but Tilly screamed so that he went away, vowing that he would never play with girls again.

"Well, what was the matter here?" asked mamma, coming into the room a few minutes after. Tilly told her.

"But, mamma," she said, "it is not true, is it, that wicked people ever cut a queen's head off with a thing like papa's razor? A queen cannot have such things done to her, can she?"

"It has happened," said mamma, "though it will never happen again. There was a time when there was a Revolution in France, and the mob put up a great razor-like thing called a guillotine, and beheaded many titled ladies, Marie Antoinette among them. But in England, also, queens have lost their heads. There was a king whom—because he was the eighth that had the same name—people called King Harry the Eighth, who was in the habit of cutting off his queens' heads. As soon as he grew angry with them he sent them to prison, and a man they called an executioner cut off their heads with a great ax. No king could do that now. But queens were as bad, also. Queen Elizabeth ordered poor Mary, Queen of Scots, to lose her head, and she laid it on the block and had it cut off."

"Oh, I thought it was grand to be a queen!"

"I have never wanted to be a queen," said mamma. "Even yet the Empress of Russia lives in dread of her life, and people are always trying to assassinate all the Russian royal family, throwing bombs at them, shooting them, and poisoning their food. Then queens have little freedom. In Spain they are so formal that everything the queen does must be done according to some old law; so that once a little girl queen, who was so sleepy that all she wanted was to get her nightgown on and go to bed, had to sit with her head nodding and the 'sand-man's bags' on her eyelids, until a certain great lady arrived whose duty it was to put that little nightgown on. No one else dared do it. The queen did not, for queens never dressed themselves."

"How funny," said Tilly. "I guess it is not worth while to be a queen."

"Queen Victoria has made it so," said her mother. "The Queen of England has always tried to do good to her people, and has always been a Christian woman as well as a queen. She taught her daughters to be sensible and useful, and when they have married into other countries, they have laughed at absurd rules, and said, 'What my mother, the Queen of England, does, I can do.' There is no folly or nonsense about Queen Victoria, and her people all love her. There is the Queen of Roumania, too, who writes pretty stories and signs herself 'Sylva Carmen.' Queens are getting much more sensible as the world goes on, and it is not likely any more queens' heads will be cut off in this world."

"I'm glad of that, mamma," said Tilly. "But tell me one thing—does Queen Victoria go to bed with her crown on?"

"Never," said mamma.

"Very well, then," said Tilly. "I shall take my Queen Isabella's off at night and put her to bed in a robe, like other dolls, for it has made me very uncomfortable to think of her sitting on her throne all night, on the bureau, with her crown upon her head."

Correspondence

A Tired Young Man.—Agnes says she has been for the past six months receiving the attentions of a young man. He was to call on her on Wednesday evening, but did not do so, making the excuse that he was too tired to go out, as he had been working hard all day. On Thursday evening he took another young lady to a party and danced until four o'clock in the morning. On Friday he told Agnes that she had no cause to complain of him for his conduct. She asks the *Ledger's* opinion of the matter. *Answer:* This is the old, old story, and there can be but one answer to it. If the young man promised to call on Wednesday evening and did not do so, he owes you an apology. Nothing is more annoying and ill-bred than making engagements and failing to keep them. As to going out with another young woman, that depends upon the understanding existing between you. If there is anything like an engagement, which is certainly the proper thing after six months of attention, he did wrong to take the other young woman out after failing to keep his engagement with you. The great trouble in most of these cases is that young men make a practice of visiting certain young women. They take very good care not to commit themselves, and then excuse all sorts of neglect by saying that, as there is no engagement, the young women have no cause for complaint. It is sometimes difficult to know what to say to such men, but as a general proposition they are best let alone. Meaningless attentions long continued never yet did any good to any woman, but have done a great deal of harm, and always will.

Bicycle Costumes.—Marguerite and Rose are fond of wheeling, and both ride very well. They have heard a great deal about divided skirts, bloomers, short dresses and leggings, and would like the *Ledger* to tell them just what sort of costume is best. *Answer:* The skirt that finds most favor with some of the best riders in the country is that which is of medium walking length. It should be three yards around at the hem, and with moderately full gathers at the back of the waist-line. The front and sides should fit smoothly, but not too snugly. The best material is a Priestley cravenette, which is water repellent and makes extremely handsome suits. It comes in both smooth and rough goods, and is very wide. Skirts should be lined with some moderately heavy fabric, so that they will not lift in the wind. A blouse or shirt-waist and blazer are required, and a cap, tourist hat or sailor, and also thick, strong gloves of leather.

Taking up Land.—W. G. is anxious to take up a homestead in Oregon or Washington, and would like to know something about the best lands and what is necessary in order to get the best results. *Answer:* In both of these States there are Information Bureaus for the instruction and assistance of just such applicants. Write to Portland, Oregon, and Olympia, Washington, for printed matter. Address your letter to the Department of Public Lands. A number of persons who have written for information have received a large amount of extremely interesting literature, and several of them have opened correspondence with parties in those localities. Being in direct communication with persons at these points it is possible to get the very newest and most reliable information. In addition, one is likely to make agreeable and valuable acquaintances.

A Dramatic Career.—Hamlet asks how to begin a dramatic career, and whether a young man who has never been to a dramatic school can get a position in a company? *Answer:* If you are but nineteen years of age, and have decided to try the stage as a profession, the best way is to engage in some ordinary capacity until you see what your talent is and how you like the business. It may be that you will become weary of it. Many people do, and are glad to return to other occupations. If you have a voice, go into a chorus, or be a "utility" man, one who can fill vacancies—a most useful gift, by the way, and one that is available elsewhere than on the stage. As for training and cultivating the voice, there is nothing like a good teacher, and good teachers are very hard to find.

Merchant Marine.—J. W. S. would like to get a position on a steamship to learn the management of vessels, and all that belongs to the handling of steamships. *Answer:* Some time ago there was a proposition to take young men on board of steamships for the purpose of teaching them practical seamanship. But the idea has not been fully carried out. You might write to the American Line of steamships, and ask if there is any chance for you there. You know the large new steamers *St. Paul* and *St. Louis* are arranged to be put into commission as ships of war if necessary. To get on board the *Essex*, apply to the member of Congress from your district for instructions.

A Point of Propriety.—Cye writes to the *Ledger* to ask what is proper in case a gentleman who is invited to a party neither comes nor sends regrets or explanations. Would it be right to omit him when making up a list of guests for another entertainment? *Answer:* When any person is invited, it is imperative either to go or to send regrets. If he cannot take the trouble to do this or is too ignorant or careless to do so, he is best left out of the company altogether.

Regular Army.—Tiskilwa wants to know what is required if one would join the Regular Army. *Answer:* Good health, a tolerably good moral character and a physical constitution that will pass muster. You might apply at Fort Sheridan. If they do not take recruits there, they will direct you where to go.

Getting Fleshy.—Polly asks how she may get fat. Her face is too thin to please her. *Answer:* Polly, fame and fortune await any one who can answer that question. Up to date it is an unanswerable one.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*

Science

Railroad Notes. The bicycle is coming to the front as a model in certain lines of railroad traffic. It is all very well to talk about high speed and crowding on steam enough to make a hundred miles an hour, but this can only be done in exceptional localities and with exceptional facilities. The entire plan of the railroad as it stands to-day is not fit for any higher rate of speed than that already attained. For successful travel at any rate much above the present, a complete overhauling of road-bed and rolling-stock is necessary. One of the first undertakings is reducing grades. This is possible and entirely practicable; then safety appliances for ordinary road traffic must be looked after. It would scarcely pay a railroad to be obliged to station guards at every crossing, but with a time schedule fixed at a hundred miles an hour, this would be among the necessities. It is altogether likely that within the next half century railroads will be lifted from the ground altogether. A substantial trestle would cost no more to equip and keep in order than the ordinary road-bed, and its advantages would be manifold. Grades could be reduced to a minimum except in mountainous regions. Heavier rails are necessary and curves must be done away with.—The weakest point of the best railroad tracks to-day are the joints. It is quite easy for the watchful ear to detect the instant when the wheels meet the joints in the rails. There is a little concussion which necessarily means a certain amount of retarding of the motion. Just how this is to be remedied inventors have not yet shown us. This is one of the undeveloped features of railroading and one on which much of the high speed of future train service depends. Close joints would be an easy achievement were it not for expansion and contraction, but these must be allowed for. A well-constructed track should give not the slightest sound as the train passes over the joints of the rails.—It is estimated that a train of ordinary Pullman cars carries one and one-half tons of dead weight for each passenger; the bicycle carries twenty pounds dead weight to the passenger, and at a much higher rate of speed. Comparing these figures, it goes without saying that there is a radical defect in the construction of Pullman cars; indeed, they have for many years been looked upon as cumbersome, stuffy and unsanitary. Who can tell the amount of disease spread by these incubators of death-dealing bacilli. These cars were well enough when they were first built, for they had to encounter all sorts of buffeting on all sorts of rough and badly-constructed roads, but they are now almost as much behind the times as the stage-coach. What is needed is a strong, light, clean, carefully-planned car weighing perhaps one-tenth as much as the present cumbersome and lumbering means of transportation. This would reduce the wear on the rails, the cost of building and the tremendous load that engines are forced to drag. It would also improve the health of the public by removing a most fruitful source of contagion.

A Photographic Marvel. Medicine and surgery are likely to be completely revolutionized by the new discoveries in photography. By means of this discovery the bones, muscles and internal organs of the body can be photographed with the utmost clearness. In one case the photograph showed the skeleton of a living man, in another a bullet was located, the case having puzzled surgeons for a long time. The light by means of which these photographs are taken is said to be made up of heat rays. It not only penetrates flesh and tissue, but wood and metal. The field opened by this discovery is practically limitless. Obscure diseases are accurately delineated before the eyes of the medical man. All of the processes of life are laid open before the scientist, the chemical changes of food can be studied and maladies which have hitherto baffled the skill of the best doctors can be investigated at pleasure. Within the last two years the statement was made that the last decade of this century would witness discoveries before which all others would fade into insignificance. Surely this new idea in photography amply fulfills the prediction, even though progress stopped here for the next ten years.

Putting on Slate Roofs. One objection to the use of slate for roofing has been the impossibility of removing it without breaking after once it was laid. This trouble is done away with by a new idea. The opening in the slate is cut in the form of a keyhole, the larger part below. The nail is driven in and the slate is hooked on by passing the nailhead through the larger part of the opening, the slate then slides down so that the narrow portion rests on the nail. It is said to be impossible to displace the slate by any ordinary storm of wind, and the work of removal is naturally easy and without danger of breakage.

New Idea in Railway Tracks. The annoyance of wheels slipping on tracks, especially in up grades, and the tremendous resistance experienced, has led to a new invention. The rail is provided with an edge or rim covered with cogs or teeth, and the wheel has similar cogs which engage with them. These cogs are set on diagonally, inclining downward, and are less likely to accumulate dust and dirt.

WOMAN'S WORLD.

All questions which may be asked on the subjects treated in this Department will be answered in the Correspondence column.

Fashion and Fancy. Out of three or four dozen dresses in an importation for the spring trade, but three had any trimming on the skirt. It seems to be the general opinion of experts that the plain, moderately wide skirt is to continue. It will be lined with some rather stiff but light material, so as to reduce the weight which has to very many women become exceedingly burdensome. One of the best models is of fine serge. The lining is a hard twisted mohair, and there is a facing of haircloth.

The haircloth petticoat will be a feature of spring styles. Some of the most approved of these are covered with light-weight taffeta for about half the distance from the hem up.

Dresses of silken fabrics will almost without exception be made with plain skirts.

The tailor costume is gradually developing into a trimmed garment. Braid, buttons, cord and stitched-on bands of the material are seen, and one handsome suit has a finish of appliqué most artistically put on. The dress is of French broadcloth in mahogany brown. The appliqué is a shade darker, and is cut out in a rather large pattern of leaves, with a stem and tendrils. The leaves are buttonholed down as well as the stem, the tendrils are done in etching stitch in heavy cord silk.

There is a tendency toward combinations in two shades of the same color. A seal-brown cloth is made up with velvet a shade lighter; two dark shades of heliotrope are combined, and two shades of dark-blue are used.

One of the most stylish of costumes is a black goods, almost as fine and thick as broadcloth. This is made up with the darkest shade of navy blue, trimmed with black silk galloon. The skirt is of the black, with appliqué of blue edged with the trimming. The waist is of black, with an Eton jacket, very wide revers and full sleeves of blue.

Indications point to the very general use of crape-surfaced goods for dresses. Smooth-surfaced fabrics are, after a time, likely to take the place of the rough and crinkled styles for dresses, and woolly-surfaced materials are to be preferred for outside garments. This makes an exceedingly pretty contrast, and is in accord with the growing inclination to appropriate certain fabrics for special uses. Crapes and rough goods will continue in fashion for the coming season at least.

The separate waist maintains its hold upon the fancy of women of all ages and conditions. So fully recognized is this idea that entire grades of materials are set apart as peculiarly adapted for waists; indeed, there are many materials that make very pretty waists, but are altogether inappropriate for skirts. For many years these fabrics have been given a subordinate position, because they were so difficult to handle. Skirts made of them would drag and draw out of shape, and unless put on in puffs or in styles where they could be firmly attached to the lining, they were unmanageable and ungraceful. The plain skirt necessarily put them out of favor, but now that the separate waist is a standard production, they are precisely what is wanted.

As for new models, there are but few. Indeed, the variety at present offered comprises everything needful in this class. Every designer looks out for new modifications, and a new idea is hailed with delight.

A very attractive waist has a yoke and front of velvet, made up smoothly on a fitted lining. Outside of this velvet and out-lining the edge of the yoke, fancy silk is shirred on full across the sides of the front and the back. The joining is finished with a braiding of velvet the color of the ground of the silk. The fullness is then gathered in at the belt and shirred closely. A ribbon belt, with bows, makes the finish. The sleeves are of straight breadths, forming a huge puff from shoulders to elbows. Below these are cuffs of velvet fitting the arms closely.

A dainty waist is of olive-green striped silk and broadcloth of the same color. The yoke, wide shoulder sections and collar and cuffs are of the cloth; the collar and cuffs are embroidered in metal threads. The sleeves are of large puffs of the silk, and the waist has the silk shirred on, making a ruffled heading where it overlaps the cloth yoke.

A new sleeve is made with four puffs, each about four inches wide. These are pushed up together until they occupy the space of but about four inches. Below this is a loose puff to the elbow, then a fitted cuff with a puff at the wrist.

Cuffs are gaining ground for nearly all sleeves. Among the prettiest of these are pointed cuffs of velvet. The use of velvet as a trimming is highly approved; collar, cuffs, belt, revers, straps across full fronts and edgings of velvet at the hem of the skirt being quite frequently seen; indeed, as a combination and trimming material it is preferred to almost all fabrics. There are also entire costumes of velvet both for out-of-door and formal occasions, and the velvet front breadth or full-length front is by no means uncommon, especially in princesse costumes, which are among the most beautiful and artistic of the new designs.

Fashion Notes. Some exceedingly pretty ball dresses for young ladies are shown. One of these has a skirt of brocade made with a corselet formed by fitting the material at the top of the skirt. This corselet is stiffened with whalebone and cut in scallops at the upper edge. The waist is of crépon, and has a half-low corsage and full puffed sleeves at the elbows. Wreaths of artificial flowers form the trimming.

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WOMAN'S WORLD.

(Continued.)

An English walking-hat has a moderately high crown and straight, rather narrow brim. The trimming is a band of velvet put smoothly around the crown and finished with wide, flat loops and one end. These loops are not drawn in but laid flat, and over the middle is a feather ornament with standing quills.

An evening dress of velvet has a plain skirt, close-fitting body and puffed sleeves of the velvet. The corsage is cut square, and the back sections, wide shoulder straps and pointed fronts are of very rich brocade. There is a ruffle, basque skirt lined with plain material the color of the brocade.

Now that almost everybody has gotten rid of her bracelets, these ornaments are again coming into fashion. They are shown in heavy, twisted bars, a favorite style being a spiral through which the hand is slipped, the spring of the metal causing it to close around the wrist.

A handsome long wrap for spring is made of fine broadcloth. It is closely fitted at the sides and back. The front has a full length section of embroidered material from collar to hem, with a wide yoke, shawl-shaped cape and cuffs, also of embroidery.

A novelty collar for spring is made of very closely plaited silk, lined with some supporting material. At intervals among the plaitings of silk are set tiny ostrich tips, either matching the silk in color or in some contrasting shade.

A new glove has a very long wrist, edged with fur and open on the outside of the arm instead of the inner side, as usual. This opening is cross-laced, the wrist being loose, the opening beginning just above it.

A novelty in gloves shows tiny ribbon bows over each button. This is pretty if the arm is thin, but for stout ladies it cannot be recommended.

For information, thanks are due to Messrs. James McCreery & Co., B. Altman & Co. and Arnold, Constable & Co

Travelling Skirts with Pockets. The fact that an article may have been principally used for mischievous purposes is not, and should not be, a bar to its adoption when it can be made to serve useful ends. The account of the arrest of a woman wearing a skirt with large pockets suggested to an ingenious damsel a most happy possibility.

Being fond of taking short trips, and very much disliking the cumbersomeness of a satchel or bag, she made a series of pockets in a petticoat. These were designed to hold brush and comb, manicure set, powder in a tiny package, and other small articles that she might need. A little pasteboard box not much larger than a good-sized candy box held a lawn gown and India silk and lace matinée. When she wished a further equipment, a larger box was provided, and an extra waist put in, as well as a pair of silk hose and such other necessaries as the length of stay demanded. Of course, immediately on her arrival the toilet articles were arranged on the dressing-case, and her skirts were relieved of all weight.

She says that this arrangement is infinitely more convenient than the old fashion of carrying a travelling-bag. She told her idea to some young friends, and several of them have expressed their determination to try the experiment. There might be times when such a device would have very evident uses. Certainly anything that will reduce the bulk of hand-luggage is to be welcomed, especially if the weather is unpleasant and one must hold up the dress, or carry an umbrella.

On one occasion this young woman took waist, matinée, night-dress and toilet articles in these pockets. She had to carry an umbrella and hold up her dress, and thanked her stars that she had no parcels with which her hands need be occupied.

Ingenuity is a good thing, and when it works in the direction of saving trouble and worry it is exceedingly well applied.

The Spread of Contagious Disease. The responsibility of those persons who supply the public with food and drink is not sufficiently realized by the community at large. Not long since a number of cases of diphtheria broke out in a neighborhood. The disease was of a very severe type, and, in several instances, proved fatal after two or three days' illness. It seemed impossible, at first, to trace the contagion to its source, but after a thorough canvass of the vicinity it was discovered that a dealer in milk had in his family a couple of cases of diphtheria. He professed ignorance of the cause of the children's sickness, and even when assured of its nature, claimed that he had no idea that it could be conveyed in milk. The fact that parents do not know how children could have contracted this disease often acts as a check upon any efforts to combat it, insisting that as the little ones have not been exposed to this malady, it certainly must be something else that ails them.

When illness of this sort breaks out in a family the only proper course is to have it investigated at once. Delays are quite sure to be disastrous if not fatal, and in the present condition of medical knowledge on this subject, there is reasonable hope of relief if attention is given when the first symptoms of illness manifest themselves.

Broiled Live Lobster. Purchase a large, live lobster. Split it down the center of the back, following the natural line. Throw a towel over t, and leave it for about ten minutes. Then remove the stomach and intestines. Place it on a broiler. Baste with melted butter over a coal fire, and broil slowly, shell side down, for at least twenty minutes. Turn, and broil the flesh side ten minutes. Turn again, baste with butter, dust with salt and pepper. Serve at once wth a small dish of melted butter.

A delicious sandwich paste to be used with graham bread is of chestnuts, boiled soft and salted.

Patterns.

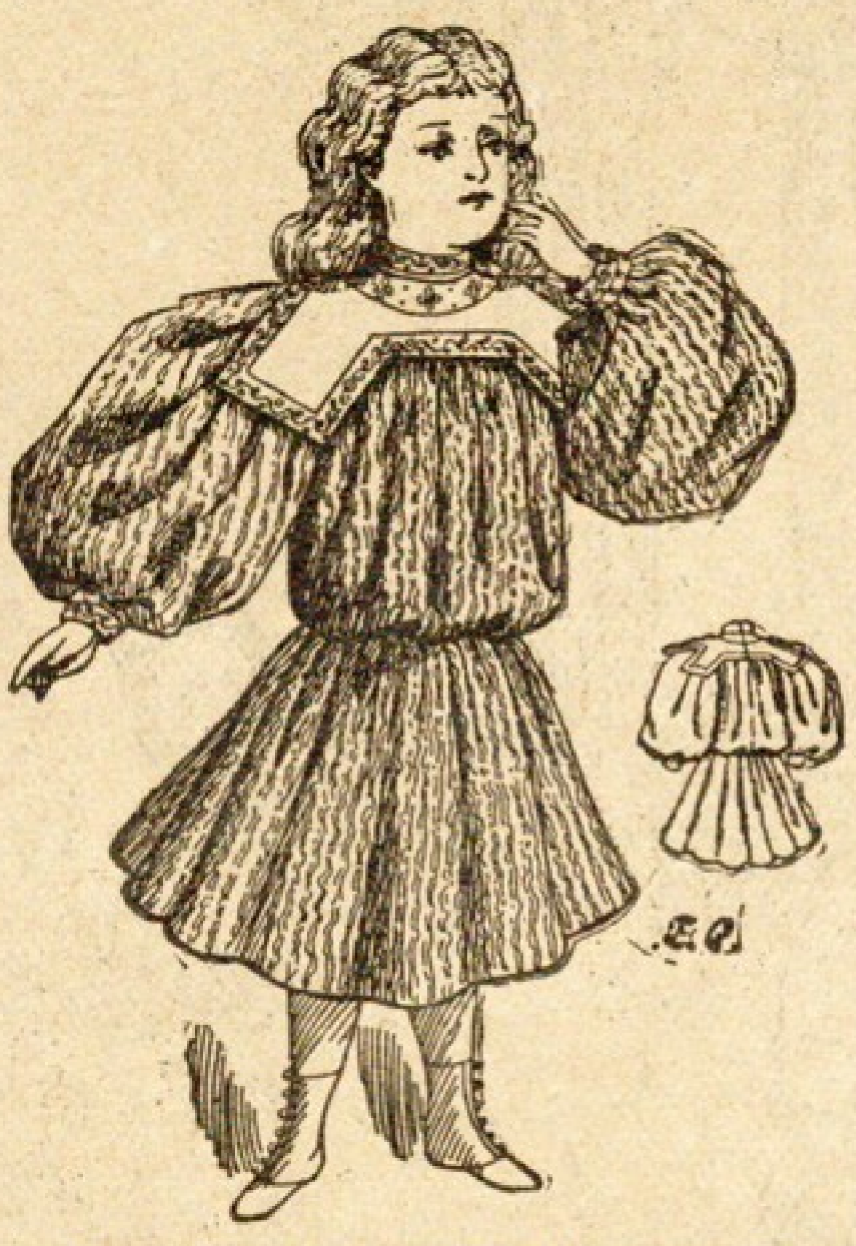
We have made special arrangements by which we can supply our readers with dress-patterns by mail, prepaid, at the nominal price of ten cents per pattern.

Each issue of the *Ledger*, hereafter, will contain illustrations of two or more new styles, for which patterns will be supplied to order. Parties ordering will please use a small sheet of plain writing-paper, small enough to go into an ordinary envelope, write name very plainly and give post-office and State, together with street and number, wherever necessary. Be careful to give correct bust-measure and the number of the pattern desired, using the number under the illustration. Inclose ten cents in stamps for each pattern ordered. State that you are a reader of the *Ledger*, otherwise these patterns will cost you 25, 30 or 35 cents each, as the case may be, these being the regular prices for which the patterns are sold.

The patterns selected for illustration in this issue are numbered 6663, 6666 and 6671.

Child's French Dress.

Fancy striped batiste in écru and pale green is here made up over pale-green taffeta, the collar, insertion and all-over embroidery that form the shallow yoke being of écru batiste. The long blouse waist is arranged over fitted body linings, the shallow round yoke portions being covered with the embroidery, and the closing is made invisibly in center back. The pretty bertha collar is of plain batiste over green taffeta, outlined with insertion, double, square tabs falling over each shoulder, with straight outline, on front and back. Full, long drooping puffs are arranged over comfortable linings that have cuff facings edged with insertion at the wrists, the standing collar being of insertion to match. The full, round skirt in fashionable length is gathered at the top and joined to the lower edge of the body, the blouse drooping over the top, as shown. Pretty dresses of plaid or mixed woolens combined with velvet or silk, can be developed by the mode for best or school wear. Cotton wash fabrics will make up stylishly by this pattern, with collar of colored chambray or batiste.



6663—CHILD'S FRENCH DRESS.

Pattern **6663** is cut in sizes for 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10-year-old girls.

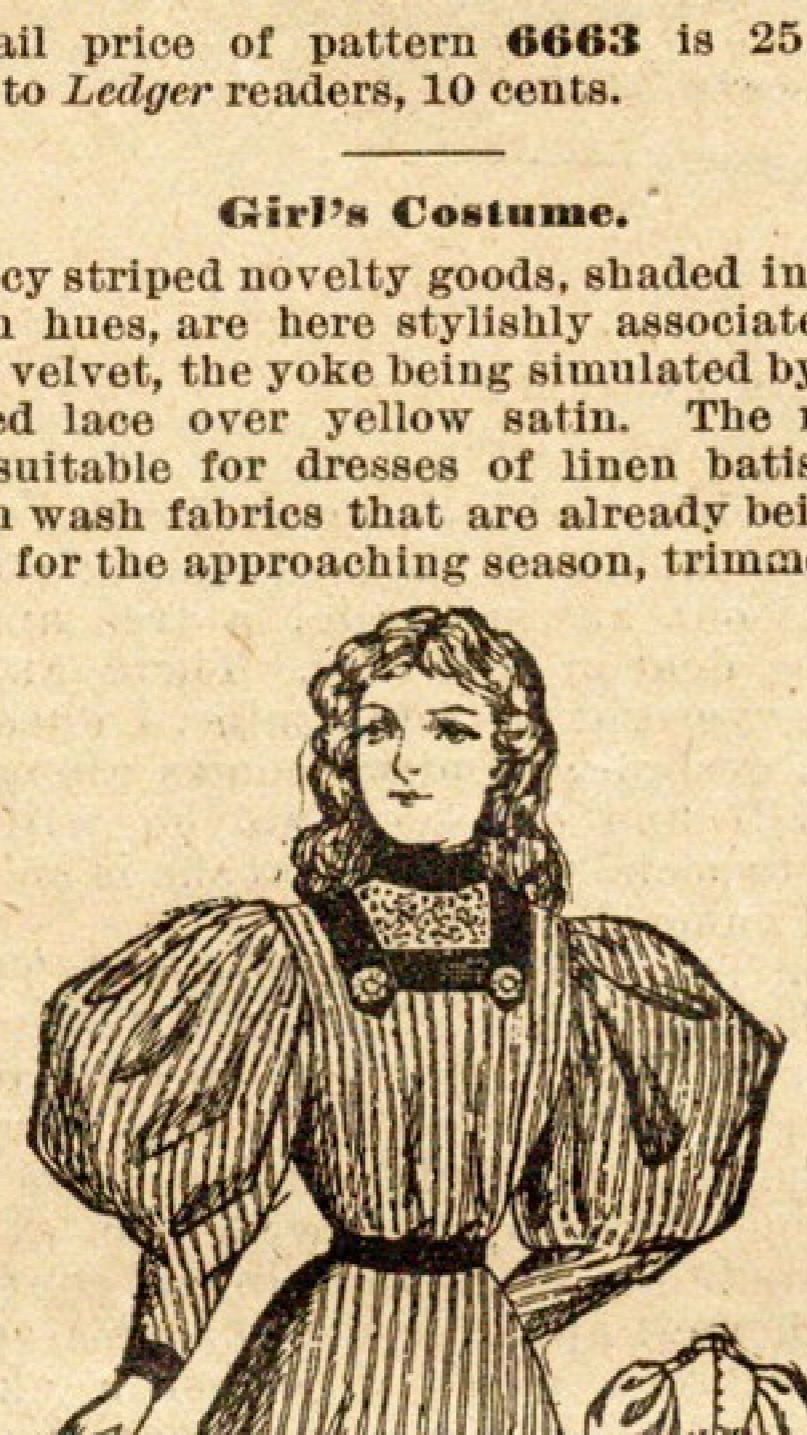
Quantity of Material 44 Inches Wide.

For girls 2 years old	2¾ yds.
" " 6 " "	3 "
" " 10 " "	3¼ "

Retail price of pattern **6663** is 25 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

Girl's Costume.

Fancy striped novelty goods, shaded in golden brown hues, are here stylishly associated with tabac velvet, the yoke being simulated by twine-colored lace over yellow satin. The mode is also suitable for dresses of linen batiste and cotten wash fabrics that are already being prepared for the approaching season, trimmed with insertion and edging of embroidery. The full waist is made up over fitted linings, on which the material is arranged smoothly at the top, the fullness at the lower edge being gathered at the waist line front and back, drooping in blouse style over the belt in front. Small gilt buttons with buttonholes effect the closing in center back, and the neck is finished with a close standing collar of velvet. The yoke is laid on over the front in square outline, edged by the bands of velvet, the side bands being finished with points held by single, large, dull gilt filigree buttons. The gigot sleeves are shaped with single seams gathered at the top and arranged over comfortably-fitted linings, the wrists being completed by bands of velvet. The circular skirt has the fullness arranged in box plaits at the back, two on each side of the placket that is made at the top of the center back seam. Velvet, ribbon, gimp, satin, chine, or Persian ribbon, bias bands of plaid, or striped silk or woolen material, can be used for decoration on dresses in this style. The added yoke can be omitted if not desired, the trimming giving the same effect. Stylish fancy plaids and clan tartans make pretty dresses trimmed with dark velvet, in this style, cheviot, camel's-hair, cashmere and other woolens developing attractively.



6666—GIRLS' COSTUME.

Pattern **6666** is cut in four sizes, for Misses of 6, 8, 10 and 12 years of age.

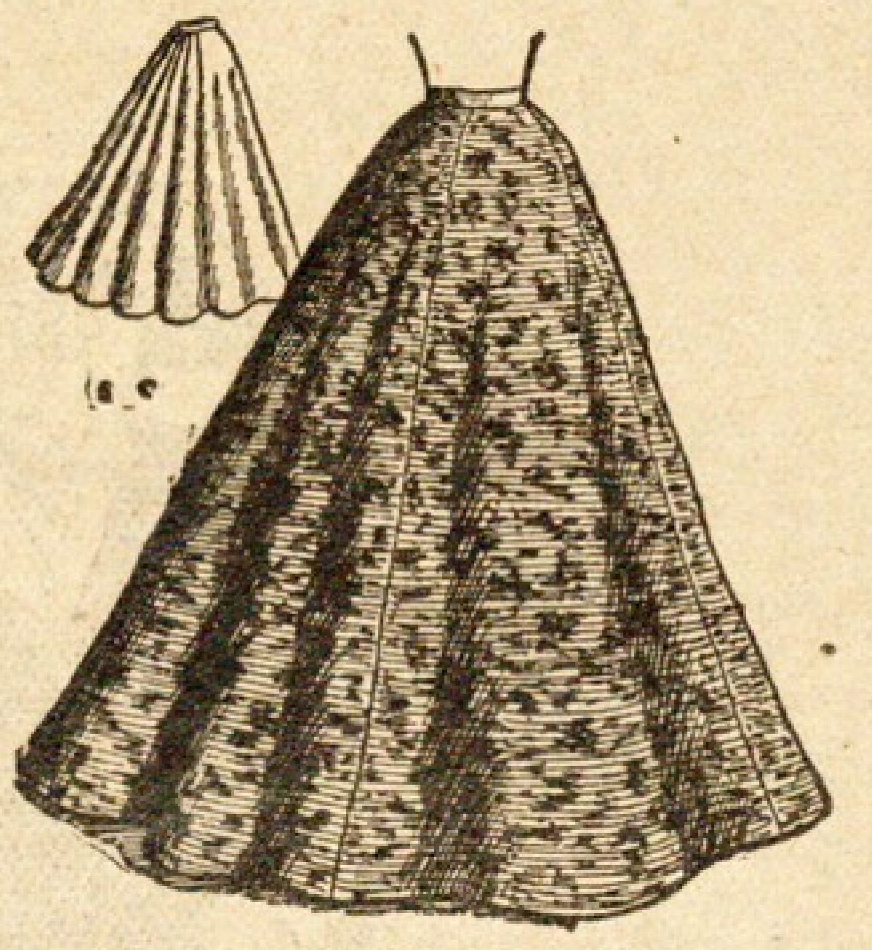
Quantity of Material 44 Inches Wide.

6 years old	2⅞ yards.
10 " "	3⅛ "
12 " "	3⅜ "

Retail price of pattern **6666** is 25 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

Ladies' Five-Gored Skirt.

Fancy mohair crépon made this stylish skirt, that answers the call for a fashionable and practical skirt of ample but not exaggerated width, that can be made up without stiffened lining and thus relieved of the great weight objectionable in skirts of the present mode. The skirt consists of a narrow front gore (a feature that is very generally becoming), wide single side-gores and two back-gores, that can be either gathered or plaited at the top. The placket is finished at the top of the center back seam, being completely hidden by the pretty fullness on each side, and that can be tacked underneath to produce the set flutes or tubular folds now in vogue, the pattern providing for this style. A pocket can be conveniently inserted in the side-back seam. The mode is adapted to any style of material in wool, silk or cotton, and will be found at once comfortable, convenient and stylish.



6671—LADIES' FIVE GORED SKIRT.

Pattern **6671** is cut in five sizes, viz., 22, 24, 26, 28 and 30 inches waist measure.

Quantity of Material 44 Inches Wide.

For	22 inches waist measure	4¼ yds.
"	26 " " "	4½ "
"	30 " " "	4¾ "

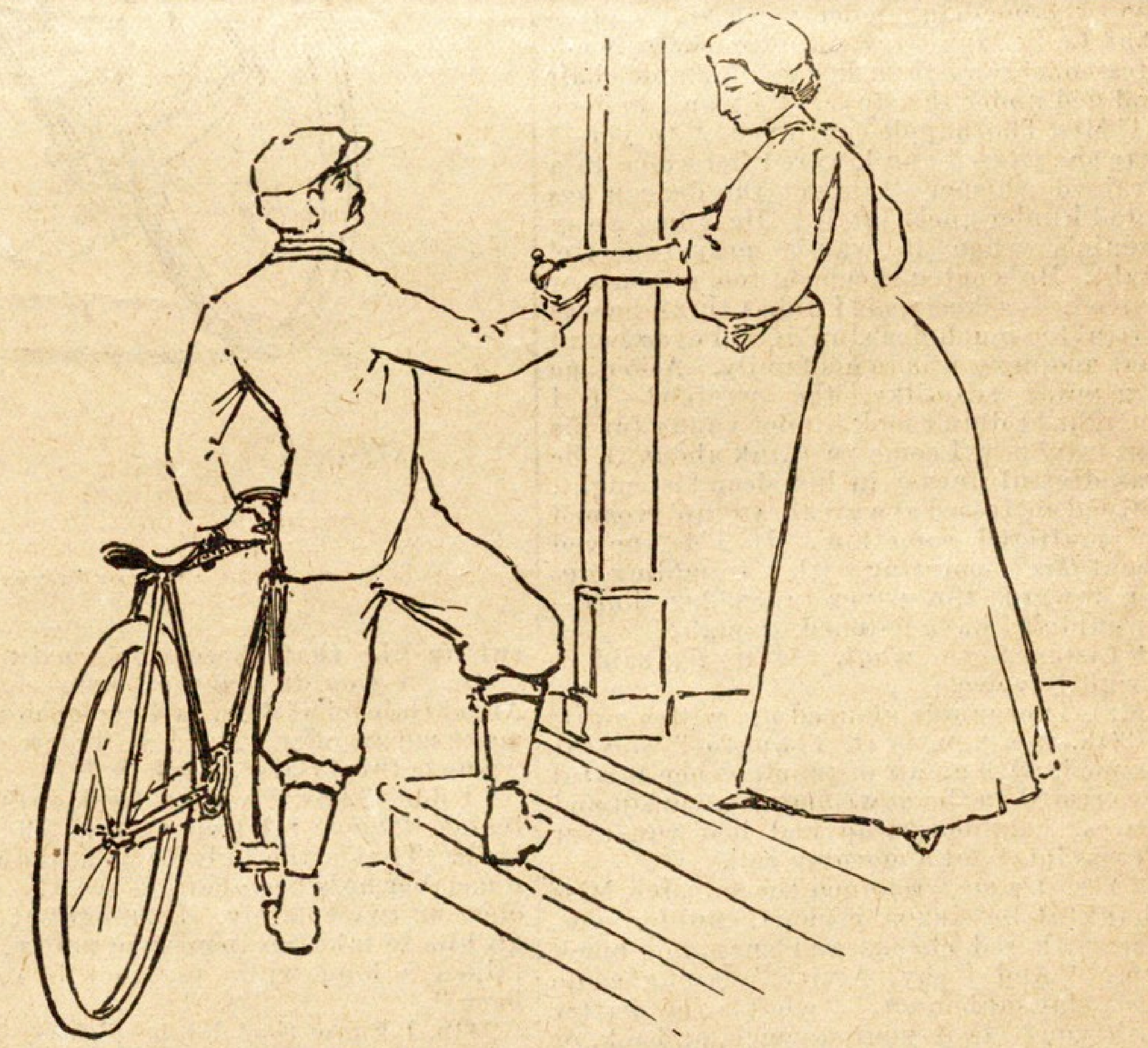
Retail price of pattern **6671** is 30 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

Take Care of Your Shoes. Since shoes have assumed so much importance, it is worth while to know how best to take care of them. First of all, have them fit properly, and this means plenty of length and plenty of room. Small feet have gone out of fashion, the object now being to have the feet look slender and trim. The long, pointed shoe has had much to do with the cultivation of symmetry of the feet. A shoe too tight is a constant strain upon the leather and the seams, and is neither durable nor attractive. If the shoes are worn in the wet they must be removed at once, rubbed dry and oiled until they are as soft as it is possible to make them. If they are wet, as is sometimes the case when one is caught in a shower, they should be laced or buttoned up, and filled with some sort of grain. For lack of something better, ordinary white beans will answer. They take the water up very quickly, and swell, thereby keeping the shoe in shape. When nearly dry, the shoes should be taken in hand and oiled until they are in fine condition. Cloth shoes should be brushed with a great deal of care. Many ladies brush their shoes too much, thus wearing out the cloth and taking off the fine polish of the leather.

A great deal has been said about the advantage of having a number of pairs of shoes at one time. As it is a well-understood fact that leather becomes somewhat dry and cracked by age, the philosophy of such a practice might well be questioned.

It is fashionable to have one's shoes match one's handsome dresses; black undressed kid slippers and black satin slippers are also stylish. One of the prettiest is a tie of black satin. These are specially liked for dressy use in the house. The best shoes are made with moderately heavy soles. They may be worn on dry days without rubbers, but thinner soles are worn by many women who never step on the street without toe-straps. This is a comfortable and sensible custom, and does away with the constant changing of shoes as one goes in and out, a practice that is extremely inconvenient, especially to women who are at all stout, as the buttoning of one's shoes when dressed in the average corset is a serious undertaking.

Chicken and Almond Sandwiches. Chop cold boiled chicken very fine. Add half a pound of finely chopped almonds, two teaspoonfuls of salt, one gill of sweet cream, and a saltspoonful of pepper. Mix well until a smooth paste is formed. Spread on slices of whole-wheat bread.



"Now, Robert, here's a "TRUMP" BICYCLE WATCH AND HOLDER I have bought for you. Fasten it on your wheel and you'll have no excuse for being late to dinner."

Every Wheel With a "Trump" Bicycle Watch and Holder *is thoroughly equipped for pleasure riding or scorching.* Costs $3.00 complete. For sale by all dealers. Send for Catalogue No. 31. If something finer is desired, send for Catalogue No. 32 of "Elfin," "Addison," and **Special Birthday Watches** for ladies, with patent safety brooch attachment which holds the watches securely to the blouse, in such a way that the time is *readily seen without taking hands from handle-bar.* If local dealer can't supply you, send your order direct, and we will deliver postpaid. Address

THE WATERBURY WATCH CO.,
Waterbury, Conn.

Mrs. Thornapple's Rival.

BY MARY E. Q. BRUSH.

A bobolink was trilling away in the meadow at the rear of the house; the teakettle was singing on the newly blacked stove; the Maltese kitten, Lady Jane Grey, was purring among the turkey-red cushions of the rocking-chair; but none of these cheering sounds had any effect on Mrs. Deacon Thornapple.

She was a tall, spare woman, with sandy hair, and a peaked face thickly sprinkled over with brown liver-spots; her eyes were dull; her mouth drooped at the corners; and her manner as she walked across the floor was listless and forlorn.

Mrs. Thornapple was of a very lugubrious nature, as her photograph, taken by a travelling photographer, plainly disclosed. That was three seasons ago. But now, on this particular May morning, Mrs. Thornapple was, as she herself expressed it, "enjoying an extry spell of poor health."

"Dear me!" she exclaimed languidly, as she took up a faded brown coat. "Dear me! I do feel bad enough to go to bed. But I've got all this mendin' to do. I never *did* see sech a man as the deacon is for bursting off buttons! And he seems to think that I can always find some to match. These cinnamon-brown ones are so odd. I don't believe I can find a single one in the button-box. No. I wonder if he hasn't any in his pocket. Sometimes he's b'en thoughtful enough to put 'em there when they've come off, or he's seen 'em danglin' by one thread. Le's see."

Mrs. Thornapple thrust her fingers into the side-pocket of the coat.

There was no button there. But she felt a little rustle of paper.

"There!" she exclaimed, with a triumphant expression, as she drew forth a crumpled envelope. "There! I'll bet a cooky that's the receipt for box-rent at the post-office, that the deacon was frettin' about last week!"

The brown coat slid from her lap as she spread the paper out upon her knee. It was curious to watch the changing expressions of her countenance as she read. Perplexity, astonishment, incredulity, wrath swept over it. A dull red brick-color obliterated the liver-spots and this gave place to a pallor that pinched her features into still sharper outlines.

She leaned back in her chair with a little fainting gasp.

"I can't believe it! I *won't* believe it!" she exclaimed, in a voice of so high a pitch that Lady Jane Grey, thinking herself addressed, sprang from her comfortable chair and fled under the stove. "I won't believe it!" Mrs. Thornapple continued. "An' yet—" here she paused and lowered her voice to a strained whisper—"an' yet the deacon *has* acted kinder queer lately! He's ben away evenin's when it wa'n't prayer-meetin' night. He's acted sheepish, too, an' once or twice he's asked me if I didn't think he was gittin' too much flesh, an' if I'd ever heard that apoplexy was in his family. Asked me —grinnin' silly-like, the wretch!—if I thought he didn't look kinder young fur his age. An' now I come to think about it, he was dretful uneasy in his sleep last night. Turned an' tossed at a great rate, an' groaned an' muttered somethin'. If I'd knowed about *this*"—pointing with a trembling finger toward the paper upon her knee—"wouldn't I have listened, though!"

"Listened to what, Alviry?" said a sprightly voice.

Mrs. Thornapple glanced up, with a start.

"Oh, it's you, is it, Thankful!" she exclaimed, with an air of relief, as her tearful eyes rested on the newcomer, her cousin and nearest neighbor, who had just run over "'cross lots" for a morning call.

"Yes, it's me," rejoined the spinster, Miss Thankful Betsinger, a short, chubby spinster, with red cheeks and snapping, black eyes. "And I say, Alviry," laying aside her "slat sunbonnet," "what's the matter with you? Is it your stomach, or back, or that old pain in your left side? You ain't feverish, be ye? Seems's though your cheeks is kinder flushed an'—why, you're all of a tremble!"

"I guess anybody'd be all of a tremble if they had sech trouble as *that!*" said Mrs. Thornapple, with a sob, pointing to the paper upon her knee.

"Why, the deacon hain't endorsed for no one, has he? 'Tain't no *subpoeny*, or *habeas corpus* or *mandamus* or any other of them law-papers that makes trouble for folks, is it?" said Miss Thankful, anxiously.

"It's worse 'n them!" groaned Mrs. Thornapple. "Read it, Thankful. I s'pose you might as well, though it's agin my principles. I've always maintained that a body shouldn't let no outsider mix in with a body's domestic troubles; but, land! if ever a person needed help and sympathy, I'm that person, Cousin Thankful; so read it."

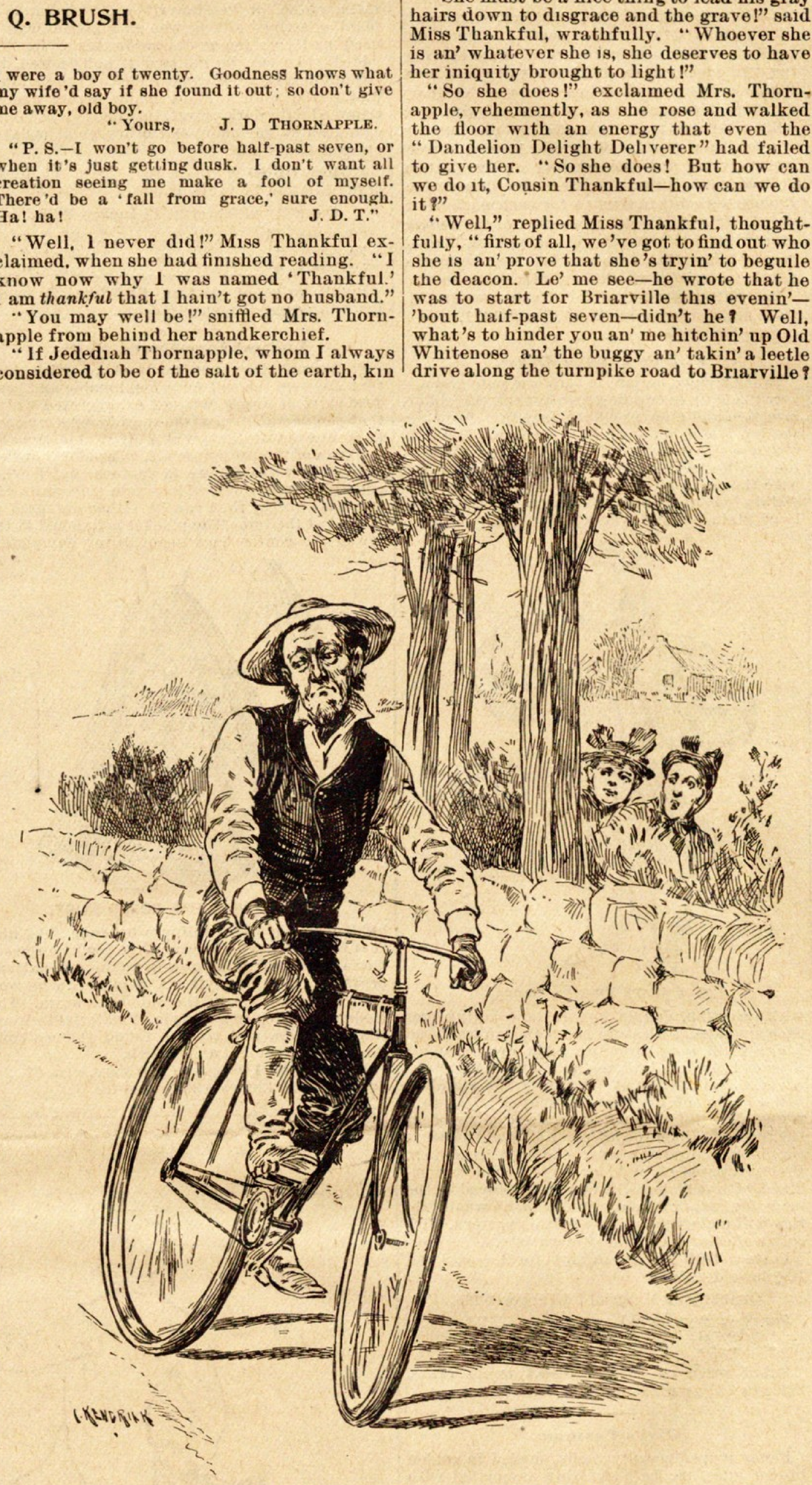
Fairly ablaze with curiosity, Miss Thankful took the paper, and with many an "Oh, dear me!" and "For pity sakes!" read as follows:

> "FRIEND DICK: Have 'Daisy' ready for me this evening. I would like to take her to Briarville. Had an awful nice time when we went to the lake, Saturday, only the road was too rough. I dare say you are laughing at the giddiness of one as old as I am, but— Well, you know how it is yourself. I am as charmed with 'Daisy' as if I were a boy of twenty. Goodness knows what my wife'd say if she found it out; so don't give me away, old boy.
>
> "Yours, J. D THORNAPPLE.
>
> "P. S.—I won't go before half-past seven, or when it's just getting dusk. I don't want all creation seeing me make a fool of myself. There'd be a 'fall from grace,' sure enough. Ha! ha! J. D. T."

"Well, I never did!" Miss Thankful exclaimed, when she had finished reading. "I know now why I was named 'Thankful.' I am *thankful* that I hain't got no husband."

"You may well be!" sniffled Mrs. Thornapple from behind her handkerchief.

"If Jedediah Thornapple, whom I always considered to be of the salt of the earth, kin cut up like that, there's no trustin's anybody. I wouldn't accept even—even the Angel Gabriel if he was to come down and make me an offer. And," still more grimly, "who is this 'Daisy,' anyhow?"



"SURE'S PREACHIN', IT'S THE DEACON!"

"I don't know!" with a fresh outburst of tears. "Some relation of that Dick Higbee's. That's the only Dick I know of. I remember he's been here to see the deacon once or twice lately. I thought it was to git him to take an insurance policy. They talked a long while together behind the barn."

"Oh, I know that Higbee," Miss Thankful observed with a sniff. "One of them slick, smooth-talkin' fellers! He ain't in no insurance business as I ever heard of. Folks said he was agent for some sportin'-goods, fish-rods, air-guns an' sech, but I guess he ain't much of anythin' to do but gittin' in mischief an' helpin' to git others into it, too. He has got some sisters an' wimmen cousins, if I remember right. Maybe he's plannin' fur some one of them named 'Daisy.' I wouldn't feel so bad, Alviry! I guess it's a put-up job. No doubt. Dick Higbee's more to blame than your husband. Maybe he has some idee o' blackmailin' the deacon! Gittin' him flighty an' bewitched as men is prone to be—silly, sinful critters! —an' then scarin' him to fork over lots of money."

"Oh, maybe it is that, Thankful," poor Mrs. Thornapple exclaimed, convulsively clutching her cousin's hand. "It can't be that the deacon's reelly depraved at heart! He's always ben sech a kind man—a good pervider an' always so ready to buy me any kind of medicin' that I seen advertised an' thought might do me good. An' he's never found fault with me, only sometimes 'cause I didn't dress up more an' go out visitin'! An' he didn't like the curtains down an' the house kept dark—we've quarrelled about that some," regretfully, adding with a fresh sob: "But, Thankful, I never did think that he'd be untrue to me—that he'd go off ridin' with a frivolous thing named *D—á—aisy!* I *know* she's young—young an' pretty!"

"She must be a nice thing to lead his gray hairs down to disgrace and the grave!" said Miss Thankful, wrathfully. "Whoever she is an' whatever she is, she deserves to have her iniquity brought to light!"

"So she does!" exclaimed Mrs. Thornapple, vehemently, as she rose and walked the floor with an energy that even the "Dandelion Delight Deliverer" had failed to give her. "So she does! But how can we do it, Cousin Thankful—how can we do it?"

"Well," replied Miss Thankful, thoughtfully, "first of all, we've got to find out who she is an' prove that she's tryin' to beguile the deacon. Le' me see—he wrote that he was to start for Briarville this evenin'—'bout half-past seven—didn't he? Well, what's to hinder you an' me hitchin' up Old Whitenose an' the buggy an' takin' a leetle drive along the turnpike road to Briarville? We kin drive into the grove by the side of the road an' hitch the horse there; then we can git out an' set under a tree an' wait till the deacon comes by. There ain't nobody's eyesight better 'n mine, I guess, an' if this designin' 'Daisy' comes along with him, I'll find out—yes, an' be willin' to swear to seein' who an' what she is an' what sort of game she is up to!"

"You're a real, true friend, Cousin Thankful—that's what you be!" Mrs. Thornapple exclaimed gratefully. "I s'pose," spiritedly, "that she thinks that my health is poor—everybody in the hull county knows what I've gone through, what with this ailment and that! An' she's plannin' an' contrivin' to set herself up to be the deacon's second wife! But I won't give her a chance. You can jest bet a gingersnap I won't. I declare I feel as strong as can be now, though this mornin' I had such a goneness in the pit of my stomach I couldn't eat a mite o' breakfast, only doughnuts an' coffee. An' now I remember," with a tremble in her voice—"I remember the deacon, *he* wa'n't so sympathizin' as usual, nor did he try to coax me to eat more vittles, as he most ginerally does. He seemed kinder absent-minded, an' about all he said was to ask where the liniment bottle was. I seen him afterward rubbin' himself in the bedroom with some of the liniment—it's the kind his old aunt Sally Myers used to make—an' I thought he'd got a touch of lumbago while plantin' corn in the medder he an' the hired man plowed up last week; but now I know it was rheumatiz he got while out ridin' in the damp air with that—that Daisy! I wonder, Cousin Thankful, that the deacon can bide the name, because he is always growlin' about the pesky daisies in the medder—"

"Which may be weeds, but ain't sinful critters," her cousin interrupted in an impressive tone.

"That's so, Thankful. Oh!" solemnly—"oh! if we can only rescue Jedediah from the snare he's fallen into!"

"We will, Alviry! We will!" firmly.

The soft spring twilight was just settling down upon hill and valley when the gaunt form of Old Whitenose, drawing an antiquated buggy, might have been seen going slowly along the road leading to the village of Briarville.

The lingering rays of the sunset tinged the landscape with pale gold and amethyst. The sweet, moist smell of upturned earth and fresh herbage filled the air.

Everything was full of peace, and even the expression of Old Whitenose's face was unusually serene as he jogged along at a funereal pace, stopping now and then to crop the clover-tufts growing by the roadside.

The two women did not mind these pauses. Miss Thankful was too busily engaged in talking about the depravity of men in general, and poor Mrs. Thornapple too absorbed in thinking about that of one in particular, to care for Old Whitenose's whims.

Presently they reached the grove, and, with much clucking and twitching of the reins, Miss Thankful induced her ancient steed to leave the highway and follow the grass-grown ruts winding among the trees, until she found a suitable one of the latter to which she might tie him.

It was a pleasant spot. There was still enough of sunlight to shimmer down in golden light among the tender, green leaves, and lie in yellow bars across the curling tips of the young ferns. Mrs. Thornapple stooped to pick some violets, growing large and purple in the moist shade. Twenty years before this, on just such a sweet May evening, she and Jedediah had walked here. What a happy time it was!

"I wore my pink dimity gown with short waist and leg-o'-mutton sleeves," said Mrs. Thornapple, mentally; "and Jedediah looked *so* handsome; and I felt that I could trust him forever. Oh, dear me! seems though—"

"Alviry! Alviry! Come here!" interrupted Miss Thankful, who was playing the part of "Sister Anne" in watching the road. "There's a black speck 'way up the turnpike!"

"I don't hear no wheels," said Mrs. Thornapple, sitting down in sudden agitation.

"The road's so sandy wheels don't make much noise; an', besides, the creek sounds so loud. But—there! I'm sure I heard some one talkin' or coughin'. Scrouge back under the hemlock, Alviry; we don't wan't 'em to see us until simultaneous all to once!"

Miss Thankful had a love for the dramatic. Her round cheeks and even the tip of her nose were flushed with excitement. Fanning her half-fainting companion, alternately scolding and striving to cheer her, she kept her eyes on the yellow streak of highway.

In spite of her boasted sharpsightedness, she found it of little avail now, for the twilight was deepening rapidly, But several rods away, dimly outlined against the umber shadows, there presently appeared the moving outlines of—*something*—man, beast or vehicle—it was difficult to determine what. At times it seemed to blot out the whole width of the highway, then it dwindled down to a dark, skeleton-like circle surmounted by a swaying silhouette.

"Pshaw!" Miss Thankful exclaimed, in disappointed tones. "It ain't no horse 'n' buggy! It's only a man on a bicycle! One of them college fellers, I guess. Must be drunk, too, for he's teeterin' around as though he didn't know what he was about."

"Perhaps we had better keep a little out of sight," Mrs. Thornapple suggested. "If he's in liquor he may be inclined to be sassy."

But just then Miss Thankful sprang to her feet, saying with a shrill, excited whisper:

"Look to the road, Alviry! Don't you see? Look! That feller on the bicycle is—sure's preachin'—it really *is—the deacon!*"

It was Deacon Thornapple.

That much maligned man, being afflicted with the popular craze, was practicing bicycle-riding, and if honest and energetic efforts deserve praise, the deacon was certainly to be commended.

Truth, however, compels me to say that he was not a graceful rider. Just then it was difficult to determine whether the deacon was trying to ride the bicycle or whether the bicycle was trying to ride the deacon. That bit of sandy road was a veritable "Jordan" for travelling, and it was filled with pebbles washed down by a recent freshet.

As the first faint rays of the moon shone down, they revealed the deacon's face, red as a full-blown peony and reeking with perspiration. For a minute he paused, with one pudgy foot pressed firmly in the sand to stay himself and his recreant steed, while he removed his hat and mopped his broad expanse of bald head; then he untied his necktie and limp collar, tucked them in his breeches' pocket, after which, with a grunt of determination, he seized the handles of his wheel again, mounted clumsily and started on with renewed vigor.

But when just opposite his unseen observers, his machine struck a hidden stump, tilted up, toppled over, depositing its rider among the brambles by the roadside.

Mrs. Thornapple uttered a shrill scream—she couldn't help it—and rushed forward to help her lord and master, whose astonishment at seeing her so unexpectedly was equalled by the surprise at the unwonted tenderness with which she helped him to rise, and flung herself upon his breast.

"There! There! Alviry!" he exclaimed, making a double effort to keep both wife and bicycle in their normal position. "There, don't cry! I ain't hurt. But, great Scott! how came you and Cousin Thankful here? Is that Old Whitenose or a spook over among the trees? Ben takin' a ride, eh? Harness bust?"

"Oh, *we're* all right," said Miss Thankful, who was the first to have her wits return. "We *was* out for a leetle drive. Alviry an' me seen you comin'—it was so dark, though, we didn't know but what it was some drunken feller."

"Well, I dunno but what the bicycle is a *leetle* drunk!" said the deacon, sheepishly. "You see," with a nervous hitch at his suspenders, "I was out fur a bit of practice. Doctor Jollaper advised me to exercise—said I was gettin' too fleshy. So I come where I did think nobody'd see me."

"Is the bicycle yourn?" his wife asked, meekly.

"No—not yet. That is, I've hired it o' Dick Higbee. He's agent fur a concern in Boston."

The two women looked at each other. Miss Thankful's eyes began to twinkle. She drew nearer the bicycle and examined its shining outlines. By the aid of the match which the deacon innocently struck in order to ascertain whether his tumble had resulted in any damage to the machine, she peered at a name stamped upon the nickel-plated surface.

"See what it says!" she whispered to Mrs. Thornapple. "See what it says!" chuckling. "It's the 'Daisy.' Fancy your bein' jealous of *a bicycle*, Alviry!"

* * * * * *

A month later Miss Thankful was riding alone along that very road, when, suddenly, two bicycle-riders darted past her. One was the deacon, sitting solidly, sturdily upright and managing his steed with skill, if not with grace.

And by his side, on another bicycle, was a figure, almost youthful in its outlines, clad in a well-fitting suit of dark-blue, with natty sailor waist and jaunty Tam-O'-Shanter cap.

"The deacon and Alviry!" soliloquized Miss Thankful, while a smile overspread her face. "*She's* learned to ride, too, and they seem as happy as two children jest let out from school. After all, folks needn't grow old 'nless they wanter. They say that Alviry don't take no medicine at all now. Her 'liver-spots' is all gone, an' she's really got quite rosy riding out with the deacon and"—chuckling—"and 'Daisy!'"

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THE BICYCLE SUIT.

BY LOUISE J. R. CHAPMAN.

"May the new woman come in on a bicycle."—SARAH HACKETT STEVENSON, *Sunset Club, Chicago.*

O woman, dear woman, so sweet and so fair,
Aglow to thy crown with the bicycle craze!
What garb hath enthralled you—what suit will you wear
When you go a-cycling these bright, sunny days?
O, woman, the New,
Be modest and true,
Whatever you wear.

There are bloomers and blazers, and costumes galore,
Short skirts and long skirts, the kilt and godet,
Tan leather leggings, with buttons three score,
Trim sandals to match, and gauntlets *au fait.*
O, woman, the New,
Be gentle and true,
Whatever you wear.

Countless the jackets just "banged" at the waist,
The redingote shrouding our girls *cap-a-pie;*
The Eton, the reefer, the loose and the laced,
Blouses and jerseys as snug as can be.
O, woman—the New—
Be tidy and true,
Whatever you wear!

There are hats, caps and "Tams" of every device,
The high and the low, the simple and gay,
The sailor, the visor, the ugly, the nice,
Tarpaulins and toques, the Fez of the Bey.
O, woman—the New—
Be dainty and true,
Whatever you wear!

Trousers *à-la-mode*—the Turk— will prevail,
(Knickerbocks only for children are cute;)
Dress womanly, girls—look charming and hale,
And who cares what's the style of your bicycle suit?
O, woman, so true—
Never old—ever new,
Be *yourself—debonair,*
Whatever you wear!

◆

HOW TO MAKE A HANDLE STICK.

Handles will get loose, do what you will, says *The Wheel*, and some time or another they will part company with the bar. Forty ways to cement them on have been exploited as many different times in the columns of the wheel papers, but the average sticker-on of handles makes the mistake of smearing the cement over the handle-bar instead of placing it inside the handle, the consequence being that the handle, when forced on, pushes up the cement, which forms in an unsightly ring round the end of the handle. The proper way is to melt a little cement, pour it into the mouth of the handle while the latter is being revolved, so as to make it run round, warm the end of the handle-bar, but not sufficiently to injure the cork or celluloid, and push the handle on. The handle-bar will thus tend to carry the cement farther in, and there will be none visible round the outside.

DOING WASHINGTON ON A WHEEL.

BY GEORGE T. MOREY.

Recently the New York *Ledger* sent me to Washington on a business trip, and as I was to interview many newsdealers in the Capital regarding the New York *Ledger* in its improved form, the proprietors of this great journal suggested that I travel about the city on my wheel. I take the opportunity afforded by the Bicycle Number of the *Ledger* to tell about my trip and about the Capital of these United States, which is also the capital city for bicycling.

Our train left Jersey City at 9:15 P.M. My light-weight wheel (twenty-two pounds only) safely checked in the baggage-car among the trunks, I entered the sleeper and was assigned my berth. The night was very cold, and being in knickerbockers, I began to think that on my arrival I would not be sufficiently clad. Engaging in friendly conversation with the porter, he informed me that it was "very warm in Wash'ton." Our train was due in Washington at 4:30 A.M., but the porter did not call us until seven, saying "All out for Wash'ton."

The first object that met my gaze was the immense dome of the Capitol, towering high above the trees and buildings of the city.

Getting my "bike" from the baggage man, I pushed across Pennsylvania Avenue to the National Hotel for breakfast. After satisfying the inner man, I ascertained from my note-book the places I was to visit. There were in all sixty newsdealers to be interviewed. My first man had a small stand down near the Washington Monument, one of the show places of the city, and after my call I stood and gazed at this great shaft, a national memorial to General Washington. (A good view of the rear of the White House can be had from here.)

I would have liked to go to the top of the monument, but business before pleasure; and having no place to leave my wheel, I rode away wheeling up Pennsylvania Avenue, toward the Capitol. Shall I ever forget it! As the colored porter truly said, it was "warm in Wash'ton." My wheel seemed alive—seemed to know it was not being pushed through country lanes, or the hodge-podge streets of Brooklyn, where I live, as I guided it up the avenue—"Penn" Avenue, as it is familiarly called by Washingtonians. This avenue is the finest in America, one hundred and sixty feet wide, with fine asphalt pavement, smooth as a billiard table, and lined on both sides by large trees.

I am nearing the Capitol. My heart gives a patriotic thrill, which all Americans experience when looking at this grand architectural pile. This magnificent structure cost over $15,000.000. Near the Capitol I talked with a dealer, who, with broom and duster in hand, was as unconcerned as any New York dealer with a news-stand under the Elevated Railroad steps. While I was carried away with the beauty and grandeur of the Capitol building, he barely gave it a glance. I would have liked to visit the interior, but had to content myself with riding around on all sides of it. I saw a sign, "Keep Off the Grass," and wondered if that was the same sign General Coxey and his band of braves read when at the National Capital.

I then pedaled out toward the Navy Yard district. This is a nice section of Washington. Here are small cottages and small houses, homes of the clerks and employees of our governmental departments.

Washington is rich in monuments. A beautiful equestrian statue of General Washington is at the intersection of Pennsylvania and New Hampshire Avenues. The statue is of bronze, cast out of captured guns donated by Congress. Near the Capitol, First Street and Maryland Avenue, is a bronze statue in honor of James A. Garfield, which represents him in the act of delivering his inaugural address on March 4, 1881. This statue was designed by J. Q. A. Ward, of New York, and is one of his most successful works. I might mention others, such as the Naval Monument; those in the Capitol building; Ethan Allen, donated by the State of Vermont; Sherman, by the State of Connecticut, and Greene, donated by the State of Rhode Island; these are in the Statuary Room.

Returning to the National Hotel for dinner, I rested, and then started down toward the White House.

Riding down Pennsylvania Avenue, past the large hotels, I came suddenly to the front of the United States Treasury. Going up the hill, and turning to my left, I passed the Army and Navy Building, and presently I came to the White House. I wanted to push up the drive and under the portico, and take a peek, but just then a very handsome carriage, drawn by two coal-black horses, passed by me and entered the gate, and I thought perhaps that is the President coming in from Woodley; but, as I had no business there, I rode away. I noticed particularly the two sentry boxes near the entrance, which I had read so much about in papers not friendly to the President.

I could make quite a long story of all the public buildings, but will notice only the buildings which I passed during the day. Besides those already mentioned there are the Smithsonian Institute, the Department of Engraving and Printing, the Post-Office Department, the Corcoran Art Gallery, and theatres, hotels, etc. I returned to my hotel at six o'clock, pretty tired with my day's work, and, checking my wheel back to New York, I found I had four hours of leisure before the train started for home. I visited Albaugh's Theatre and saw Shakespeare's "Julius Cæsar," with its array of Roman Senators, and wondered how many of our United States Senators were in the audience, looking at these lawmakers and lawbreakers of the time of Julius Cæsar.

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WHEELS BUILT FOR WOMEN.

It's the Wrong Wheel, Not the Wrong Dress, that Makes the Girl a Guy.

We copy the following interesting communication from our brilliant contemporary, the New York *Sun:*

"One of the popular fallacies of the day is that a woman's appearance on a wheel is a matter of dress, whereas it is entirely dependent on the proportions of the wheel she rides. A woman buys a wheel out of the general stock. She rides it. She is not satisfied with her appearance. She realizes that the majority of the other women she sees on wheels are guys; and then she falls to discussing the burning question of how she shall dress.

"Ankle or calf, nowhere or knee?
Where is the end of her dress to be?

"Those in favor of the simple bloomer or knicker will say 'Nowhere,' while those who wish to retain the skirt in some form will continue to differ as to its length and width. Thousands of columns have been filled with the discussion of the proper dress for wheelwomen, and still the matter is unsettled. The trouble is not with the dress at all, but with the wheel.

"In the first place, it is idle for women to contend that the ordinary dress is as comfortable on a wheel as the divided skirt or bloomers, and, in the same degree, that either of the latter is as good as knickers. Any woman who has tried the experiment will agree to this,

"Why, then, do not women adopt knickers? There must be some other reason than that of comfort and convenience, and it is simply one of appearance. Every woman wants to look well on her wheel, and no woman loses sight of the importance of looking well off her wheel in her cycling dress.

"This brings us to the consideration of a principle well known to all artists, which has never yet been mentioned in this connection that I know of. This is the fact that no woman looks well in motion. Take a hundred horsewomen, however well dressed; it is the one that looks really well and the ninety-nine that fill the intermediate stages from passable to frights. The same is true of wheelwomen. It is an occasional one that looks well when riding, while the great majority appear to disadvantage, however well they may be dressed.

"If we refer to the most famous works of art we shall find the principle just mentioned carefully observed by both sculptor and painter. The perfectly formed female figure is always represented in repose, while the male figure appears best in action. Take the Rape of the Sabines. However energetic the treatment of the male figures, that of the female lies in the absolute repose of an apparent swoon. How perfect and inimitable the repose of the Venus of Milo! How terrible the masculine struggles of the Laocoön!

"If we go a step further we shall find another article in the artist's creed. When the female form is to be represented in action, the model selected is not that of a perfectly womanly woman, but rather one approaching the masculine type. Look at the difference between the figures of Diana and of the Venus de Medici. Put Diana in knickers and a cap, and she will be a very passable youth, but nothing could disguise the Venus.

"If we apply this principle to wheelwomen, we shall find it equally true. The less womanly a woman is, and the more nearly her form approaches the masculine type, the better she will appear on wheel or horseback.

"Visitors to Asbury Park last summer continually turned to admire a tall, thin, flat-chested girl, who sat her wheel straight as an arrow. A moment later the same people would turn to smile at a brown-haired girl from Tennessee whose softly rounded knees worked like the walking-beam of a ferryboat, and whose well-fitting dress never for a moment suggested that it covered one of the most beautiful forms in America.

"When both wheels stopped at the pier, the riders stepped to the ground, and the attractiveness of each was immediately reversed. The flat-chested girl was a guy, the other a Venus. What was the cause? Not the dress, for the dresses of both were almost identical in cut, Not the wheels, for both were the same make and gear. It was the motion, nothing more. When the taller and thinner woman sat her wheel she followed the $6\frac{3}{4}$-throw of the cranks with her ankles, reducing the movement of the knees as much as possible, until, in proportion to her height, which must have been 5 feet 8 inches at least, it was hardly perceptible. Not so the other. The continual swing of her shorter limbs through a circle $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter was so ungainly that it entirely diverted attention from the artistic beauty of her figure.

"Ten days after this girl was put upon a wheel geared down to 49, with a 26-inch driver, the front and rear sprockets being 17 to 8, respectively, and the throw of the cranks reduced to $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. This is about the proportion of crank to gear in the old high racing wheels, ridden at the shortest pedal notch, and is quite enough for ordinarily level roads, such as a woman would ride. So much did this reduce the apparent motion of the Tennessee belle's knees that her rival actually lost by comparison.

"What women want is not a better dress, but less motion on the wheel. Beauty must approach repose. HOMOCYCLE."

THE WONDER OF TO-DAY OVERTOPS THE TRIUMPHS OF TWENTY CENTURIES AGO.
Monarch Bicycles
A MARVEL OF MECHANICAL SKILL.
FOUR STYLES $80.00 AND $100.00
TRADE MARK
MONARCH CYCLE M'F'G CO.
CHICAGO.
NEW YORK, SAN FRANCISCO, TORONTO.

Four Days on the Battlefield.

A Russian Story.

BY V. M. GARSHINE.

I remember our running through the wood, and how the cannon balls whistled as they tore down the branches of the hawthorn bushes as we broke through them. Beyond the border of the forest we could see something red flashing here and there. Sidoroff, a young soldier from the first battalion, suddenly fell to the ground, and silently looked at me with big, frightened eyes. From his mouth poured a wave of blood. Yes, I remember it very well. I also remember the Turk I noticed when we reached the clearing. He was tall and stout, and I was short and thin. I ran straight toward him. Something snapped. Something huge, as it seemed to me, flew past me. I heard it whistle. "He has shot at me," I thought. But he, with a wail of pain, leaned against the hawthorn bush. With a blow I knocked the musket out of his hands; with another I thrust his bayonet far away. I heard him moan, and then I rushed on. Our men cried: "Hurrah!" Some fell. Some gave fire. When I had left the wood, I also fired several times right on the plain. Suddenly the "Hurrah!" grew louder, and we all rushed on—that is, not we, but our men, for I remained. This seemed strange to me, and, yet more strange, that everything had disappeared and the noise had stopped. I heard nothing, but I saw a bit of blue color before me, very likely the sky. After a while this also had vanished.

I was never in such a funny state before. I am lying, it seems, on my stomach, and I see before me a bit of ground. A few grasses, little broken pieces of last year's herbs, and some ants crawling over them—this is all my world. And all this I see with but one eye; the other is closed with something hard—perhaps a branch on which my head rests. I feel very uncomfortable, and I want to move; but I do not understand why I am not able to. Time passes. I hear the noise of the grasshopper, the buzzing of the bee. At last I make an effort to free my right hand from under my body, and leaning with both hands on the ground, I try to stand on my knees. Something sharp and quick as lightning passes through my body, and once more I fall. Once more darkness and nothingness.

I awake. How is it that I now see the stars shining brightly on the dark-blue Bulgarian sky? Am I not in my tent? Why am I not there? I try to move, but I feel a torturing pain in my legs. Yes, I have been wounded in the battle. Dangerously? I touch my leg where I feel the pain. Both legs are covered with blood; when I touch them, the pain grows stronger. There is a noise in my ears and my head is heavy. In a confused way I understand that I am hurt in both legs. How did it happen? Why did they not pick me up? Is it possible that the Turks have beaten us? I try to remember what has happened to me, first in a confused manner and afterwards more clearly. I reember now that we were not beaten at all, but that we began to run, and that I had to drop down on the plain near a hill. Our commander had pointed to the plain. "Boys, we shall be there," he had called out. And we were there; that proves that we are not beaten. But why did they leave me? This is an open place, where they could have seen me. They fired so often, very likely I am not alone. I must turn my head and see. I can do so easily, as this time I had fallen on my back—this accounts for my seeing the stars, instead of the ground. I raise myself into a sitting position, but this is hard work, when both legs are wounded. Several times I have to rest, and the pain brings tears into my eyes. At last I sit up. Above me are the dark-blue sky and the twinkling stars; around me seems something dark and high. My hair stands on end—I have fallen into the bushes, and they have not found me. But how did I get here, when they shot at me on the plain? Very likely, driven by pain, I had rushed on. Strange! Now I am not able to move, and then I could run so far.

The big stars have grown paler and the little ones have disappeared; the moon is rising. How good to be at home! I hear strange sounds; it seems that after all there is somebody. Yes, that was a groan. Is there somebody near me, also forgotten, with wounded legs, or a ball in his stomach? No, the groans are too near, for there is nobody so close to me. Good heavens! it is myself! Slow, plaintive groans! Am I really so sick? Very likely. But I hardly realize the pain, because there is a mist in my head, it feels like lead. I had better lie down and sleep. Sleep? Shall I ever wake up? I hardly care.

Suddenly a broad streak of moonlight illuminates the place where I am about to lie down, and I see something dark and big lying at a few steps from me. Something on it glistens in the light of the moon—I recognize a brass button. Very likely a dead body or a wounded man. All the same to me, I lie down.

No, it cannot be! Our men have not left the field. They have beaten the Turks and have remained in this position. But why do I not hear the sound of voices or the crackling of fire? But then I am so weak that I am not able to strain my ears. Surely they are here.

"Help, help!" I call out.

Wild, hoarse sounds burst from my chest; they remain unanswered. All is silent around me. The moon has a mournful expression on her round face. I remember the bright buttons. "If he were alive he would have heard my call. He is dead. Is he ours or a Turk? Oh, God, if it were not, all the same!" And sleep closes my weary eyes.

I am lying with shut eyes, although I awoke long ago. Through the thick branches of the hawthorn I feel the heat of the sun, and I do not care to open them. It is better not to move at all. Yesterday (was it yesterday?) I was wounded. One day has passed, others will pass, and I shall die. How good it would be not to think, but this is impossible. Thoughts and remembrances come to my mind, and besides, it will soon be over. They will publish that our losses were of no consequence. "Wounded, so many; killed, Ivanoff, a private from the volunteers." Perhaps they will not put the name. Simply, "killed, one." A private! As if they would say "a dog."

It was long ago. All my life, that is, the life when I was not lying here, seems so long ago. I walked in the street, where I saw a crowd of people looking at something white, covered with blood. It was a pretty little dog, which had been killed by the tramway. A man came and carried it away.

Will they carry me away, too, or shall I remain here to die? How sweet life seems to me! When I saw the little dog that day, I had felt happy. Remembrance, why do you torture me? The past, happiness; the present, misery. Homesickness, thou art worse than all the wounds!

It is growing warm, the sun is burning. I open my eyes and I see the same bushes, the same sky, but in broad daylight. And there is my neighbor. Yes, it is a dead Turk. What a giant! I remember him; he is the same I killed. Why did I kill him? Why did he come here? Who is he? Like myself, he may have an old mother looking out for him. And I? And I also— Yes, I should like to change with him. He does not hear; he does not feel the pain in his wounds, anguish or thirst. The bayonet pierced his heart right through. There is a great black hole in his uniform—this was done by me. I did not want to do it. I did not wish to harm anybody when I went to the war. I did not expect to kill people. I had thought more of exposing my own breast to the enemy's balls. And then? Fool, fool! And this wretched *fellah* (he wears the Egyptian uniform), his fault it was still less. He had never heard of Russia or Bulgaria. He was told to go, and he went. We attacked, he defended himself. Where is his fault, and why did I kill him? Why does thirst torture me? Who knows what that means? Even when we marched through Roumelia, under a glaring tropical sun I did not feel the thirst as I feel it now. Oh, if some one would but come!

Good heavens! In his great flask there may still be some water; but how to reach it? It will cost me agonies, but I must try. I begin to crawl. My feet drag; my weakened hands are hardly able to move the lifeless body. There are but a few steps to the dead body, but for me the distance seems endless. I must. My throat is parched and burns like fire. I should die soon without water, but I go on. Every movement is agony. I scream—I scream with sobs. At last I reach the flask—there is water enough to last me till I die. He whom I have killed saves me now. I try to open the flask, but the effort is too great. I lose balance and fall right on the body of the dead Turk. I could smell the odor of decay. I took a long draught. The water was warm, but fresh, and would last me several days. I had read somewhere that a man could live a week without food if he had water. What if I live several days longer? Our men are gone, the Bulgarians dispersed; there are no roads. Die I must; but instead of three days' suffering I shall suffer a week. Perhaps it would be better to end directly. Near my neighbor lies his gun. I have but to stretch out my arm; one moment and all is finished. Shall I do it, or shall I wait? Deliverance or death? No, I shall have courage. I shall struggle on to the last. If they find me I am saved. Perhaps my bones are not touched, and then they will cure me. I shall once more see my home, mother and Mary.

O, Lord, never let them know the truth! Let them think that I was killed at once.

I am beginning to feel dizzy; my visit to my neighbor has entirely exhausted me. He is growing black and beginning to decay—what will become of him later? I can hardly bear the odor, and I am not able to move. The sun scorches my face and my hands. Nothing to cover me. If night would but come; this will be the second, I think.

My thoughts are growing confused.

I must have slept long, for when I awoke it was night. My condition is the same. My wounds hurt; my neighbor, huge and lifeless, is still there.

I cannot help thinking of him. Is it possible that I have left all that is dear and precious to me, that I have come thousands of versts, have starved and frozen and been tormented by heat and thirst, and am now lying here in agony, only in order to kill this miserable Turk? Did I accomplish anything else besides this murder?

Murder—murderer! And who? I!

When I longed to join the army, my mother and sister did not keep me back, although they grieved deeply. I was sorry for them, but, blinded, I refused to see their tears. I did not understand how much I hurt them. Now I do.

If I could but bring back the past! How strange my conduct seemed to our friends!

"Madman, you do not know what you are doing!" they had said. How could they talk like this when our country was in question? Where was the love and patriotism they were constantly extolling? When I aimed at all these lauded virtues, why did they call me madman? I went with thousands of others, some of them like myself, as volunteers.

A sharp morning wind stirring the bushes reminds me that this is my third day of suffering. The third! How may more? I am too weak to move away from the dead body. We shall soon be equals. I am thirsty. I shall drink three times a day, morning, noon and night.

The sun has risen. Its great circle, crossed and divided by the boughs of the hawthorn, is red as blood. It will surely be warm to-day. My neighbor—what will become of him? He is terrible now. His hair is beginning to fall off; his dark, Egyptian skin has become yellow; his face has swollen to such an extent that it has burst on one side, and the worms are covering it. What will the sun do with him to-day? To lie near him is impossible. I must move farther, however I shall have to suffer for it. But how? I am able to extend my hand and open the flask—but to move my heavy, immovable body! I must, if it should take me hours to make a step.

The whole morning passes in the effort. The pain is terrible; but what is that to me? I have forgotten how it is to feel well. I have succeeded in reaching the old place; but even here I have the terrible odor of the decaying body, carried to and fro by the wind. It makes me sick. My empty stomach is shrinking; I am beginning to feel spasms; my whole interior turns with the terrible odor, which does not leave me for a moment! I have reached despair, and I weep—weep like an infant. Exhausted, all torn by the thorns of the bush, I feel almost unconscious.

Suddenly—is this a mistake?—I hear talking and the stamping of hoofs. I was going to scream, but refrained. If these should be the Turks! Then, to my own suffering, others still greater would be added. I have heard and read how the Turks tear off the skin and burn the wounds. Nothing worse than brutish men! Will it be better to end life in the hands of the Turks or here? But if they should be our men? Oh, these bushes! Why are they so thick? I can hardly see through them! There is one little place like a window which enables me to see in the distance. There seems to be the little brook where we quenched our thirst in the battle; and there is the big stone which was our bridge across the brook. They will surely come this way! My hearing has grown so weak that I cannot distinguish the language which they talk. Lord! if they should be *ours!* I shall call out! They will hear me from the brook. Why does it take them so long? Impatience tortures me. I do not even notice the odor, although it is increasing—and suddenly Cossacks appear on the other side of the brook. The blue coats, with red stripes on the trousers—the lances—a whole battalion! In front, on a beautiful horse, the dark officer. As soon as they had reached the brook, he suddenly commanded:

"Turn—march!"

"For Heaven's sake, stop! Help! Help!" I scream; but the stamping of the hoofs and the general noise drown my rattling cries, and I am not heard. Oh, God! In my helplessness I fall with my face to the ground and I sob. From the overturned flask flows the water—my life, my salvation from death. After this I lost consciousness, and must have lain for many hours in this state, till at last a gust of wind blowing the terrible odor over me brought me to my senses. I looked at my neighbor; he had changed beyond expression. The first look at him nearly frightened me to death. The flesh had dropped off his face, and although I had often touched a skull, I had never yet seen anything that might have been compared to that awful, hideous, bony smile. I began to shiver when I looked at the skeleton in the uniform with the bright buttons. "This is war," I thought—"the representation of it!"

Once more the burning sun scorches my face and hands and causes me to feel thirsty. Not a drop of water is left in the flask. Why did I not scream louder? The Cossacks might have heard me. Even the Turks would be better than these pangs. Mother! darling mother! you would tear your hair if you knew! You would curse those who instigated the war to bring suffering upon people! Good-bye, mother, sister—all!

Once more the little white dog. Why did I come here? To-morrow is the third day—how many more? Death, where art thou! Come, take me!

But death does not come. I have still to live and to suffer. I am here under the burning sun, without a drop of water, and the nearness of the dead body is poisoning me. The worms have nearly finished him, and then they will be ready for me. The day passes and the night. The same thing. Another morning and another night.

There is a stir in the branches, and a noise as if they were talking. "You will die, die, die!" they whisper. "Never see again!" answer the bushes from the other side.

"From here you can see them!" says a loud voice near me.

I start and gain consciousness at once. Through the bushes I can see the kind blue eyes of Iakovlev, our corporal, looking at me.

"Shovels!" he cried. "Here are two more, ours and theirs."

"No shovels! I don't need to be buried! I am alive!" I want to call out; but my throat is parched, and the closed lips are unable to utter a sound.

"Heavens! He is alive! Mr. Ivanoff! Boys, come here! Our young *carine* (master) *is alive!* Quickly call the doctor!"

Although one of my legs had to be operated upon, I have lived to tell and write of the terrible days I passed on the field of war.

REDDING'S Russia Salve

Your Own Emergency Hospital.

H Piles, Eczema, Cuts,
E Chapped Hands, Corns,
A Chilblains, Salt Rheum,
L All Skin Diseases,
S Burns, Scalds and Sores.

25c. All Druggists.

Send 10c. for KING'S VIEWS OF BOSTON, a beautiful book, 10 x 15 in., of 100 views of the most historic city in our country, to REDDING & CO., Inc., 129 Pearl Street, Boston, Mass.

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GOSPEL TRUTH.

Why Tell a Lie and Get Caught at It?

True Merit Always Stands the Test—A Few Instances to Prove It—Many More Where They Come From.

Testimonials are not much good in a horse trade.

You want to buy a horse to trot in three minutes. Trot the horse, that tells the story.

Every day we get letters saying, "If we only knew that No-To-Bac would cure the tobacco habit we would gladly give five times the price."

We often wonder whether such people really want a cure.

Why?

Simply because we absolutely sell No-To-Bac under a guarantee to cure, and at a price within the reach of all. Your own druggist guarantees it, so you don't have to take our word.

Over 20,000 druggists sell and guarantee No-To-Bac; over 1,000,000 boxes sold; over 300,000 cures; over 10,000 testimonial letters with requests to publish. Here are a few:

MINISTER SAVED AFTER 31 YEARS.

TYRONE, ARK., Sept. 16th, 1895.

Gentlemen: I must say that for 31 years I have been a perfect slave to tobacco, and can safely say, as a minister of the gospel, that two boxes of No-To-Bac have completely cured me of any desire for the poisonous weed, so that I feel like a man once more in life. Yours truly,

Rev. J. A. PRESTON.

DRIVEN OUT OF TEXAS.

CLOVERDALE, IND., August 10th, 1895.

Gentlemen: One year ago, while living in Henrietta, Texas, I became so nervous from the use of tobacco that it was a burden to me to keep still in one place any length of time.

I bought one box of your No-To-Bac and used it according to directions, and gained 15 pounds in two weeks. It cured me of the use of tobacco and also of nervousness, for which I am thankful. Yours respectfully, J. E. FRAIZER.

HAD TOBACCO HEART FAILURE.

JAMESTOWN, N. Y., September 25th, 1895.

Dear Sir: I have been cured of the use of tobacco by taking No-To-Bac. I never felt better in my life than right now. I am forty-nine years old, and do not know what sickness means now. I used to be sick while using tobacco, and had spells of heart failure, but it is all gone, thanks to No-To-Bac. Very truly yours,

JAMES C. BATEMAN.

YEARS OF TOBACCO EATING.

GALENA, KAS., July 27th, 1895.

Gentlemen: A year ago I sent to you for three boxes of No-To-Bac, and before two were used all desire for tobacco was gone, and since tobacco has not entered my mouth—and this, after not chewing, but *eating it for years.* I used over a pound a week. I can say to all who desire to quit tobacco permanently, give No-To-Bac an honest trial and you will succeed. Respectfully,

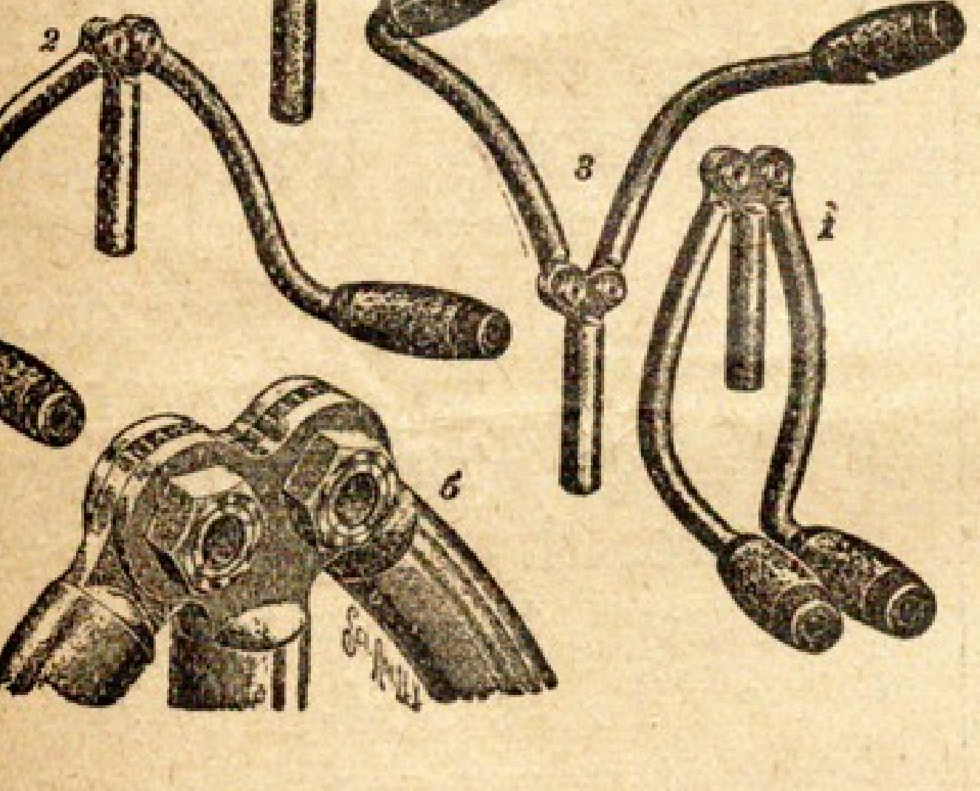
W. H. BOYCE.

Now, frankly, what more can we do or say? It is for you to act. Just try to-day, the right time is right now. If you don't like feeling better after the first week you can learn tobacco using over again. Get our booklet, "Don't Tobacco Spit and Smoke Your Life Away." Written guarantee, free sample, mailed for the asking. Address The Sterling Remedy Co., Chicago or New York. —4.

NEW ADJUSTABLE HANDLEBAR.

John P. Lovell Arms Company Brings Out a Clever Design.

The question of an adjustable handlebar has been rather a puzzling one, but the John P. Lovell Arms Company, of Boston, has brought out a new one which seems to meet all the requirements. In the upper part of the handlebar stem is a double-swivel joint, which receives the ends of the two bars, they being secured by bolts passing through them. The handlebars terminate in lugs, fitting within the swivel joints, provided on their inner periphery with teeth. When the handlebars are in position these teeth mesh into each other, rendering the movements of the bars inter-dependent. If one bar is raised, the other rises with it, and *vice versa*, so the handlebars are always on the same level. The inclination of the handles is invariable. This is an advantage when stored in the hallway of a house, shipped on trains, or in crating, or placed in any position where the space is contracted, there being no loose and attached handlebars, to be tied on or otherwise disposed of. The handlebar can be adjusted to any position desired by the rider. —*a.*



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—The new game that is now raging is called The Brownies' Game of Leap Frog. Manufactured and sold by The Game and Puzzle Co., St. Paul, Minn. See their advertisement in this issue, and send at once. —*a.*

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OILS CURE FOR CANCER.

Doctor Bye has discovered a combination of oils that readily cure cancer, catarrh, tumors and malignant skin diseases. He has cured over six thousand persons within the last three years, over one hundred of whom were physicians. Readers having friends afflicted should cut this out and send it to them. Book sent free, giving particulars and prices of oils. Address Doctor Bye, Indianapolis, Ind.

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—In these days when the selfishness of money-getting extinguishes to so great an extent the gentler and finer feelings, it is a pleasure indeed to note the voluntary action of a great firm or corporation going outside the usual lines and assuming an expense to a considerable amount for the benefit of employees. The Indiana Bicycle Co., manufacturers of the Waverley bicycles, does this in a most pleasing way. Beginning January 1st, this company furnishes free medical attendance for all of its 1,000 or more employees and their families. It also furnishes warm soup and coffee for the men in the works at the noon lunch hour. Office rooms for a physician have been fitted up in the big factory building and the doctor will be in attendance constantly during working hours. As an example of warm-hearted and friendly consideration of their employees, this move on the part of the company is hard to beat, and will greatly increase the loyalty of its employees.—*Cycle Club Bulletin.* —*a.*

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STEKETEE'S PIN WORM DESTROYER—CURES WORM SPASMS.

D. M. Herron of Snohomish, Wash., writes: "I received a bottle of your Worm Destroyer. My little girl used it for Worm Spasms, and it cured her. I gave a neighbor a few doses for her child: it was gnawing its tongue--was stupid. It was entirely cured by the use of this valuable remedy." Sent by mail on receipt of 25c. U. S. Postage. Address Geo. G. Steketee, Grand Rapids, Mich. Send at once and mention the New York *Ledger*. —*a.*

◆

TRIUMPH GUITARS AND MANDOLINS

Are manufactured by the Wolfram Guitar Co., Columbus, O. They are the only instruments having Wolfram's Patent Metallic Finger-board, which keeps the neck from bending, no frets can fall out and the scale is positively true. The tone is sweet and powerful. The Wolfram Guitar Co. sell direct to students and players at wholesale rates. Send at once for their catalogue, mentioning the New York *Ledger*. —*a.*

Hair A POPULAR BOOK on its CARE, DISEASES and TREATMENT, by Dr. Leonard. 320 pp., 116 cuts, postpaid, $1.00. Circular free. Gives self-treatment for ALL Hair and Beard Diseases. Illust'd Medical Jour. Co., Publishers, Detroit, Mich.

Be sure to mention the New York *Ledger*.

FOREST AND STREAM.

Along the line of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway between Clifton Forge and Charleston, a distance of 150 miles, it is one continuous game country. Last November, just east of Milboro, I saw from the car window a small black bear scratching for acorns on a side hill. Early in the same month sixteen deer were started by five persons at Alleghany station, and at Covington one young buck jumped the hotel fence, crossed the grounds and forded Jackson's River. Dunlap's Creek, three or four miles up, is a good place to find deer, and as for wild turkeys, they are very abundant in the eastern part of West Virginia, near Doswell.

Brook trout are caught in considerable numbers in Falling Springs Creek, Anthony's Creek, Cherry River, the Quinnimont and various other branches, runs and creeks, as the smaller watercourses are designated in these parts, all within easy reach of Covington by railroad or wagon; and black bass are abundant in Jackson River and Dunlap's Creek on the edge of the town, and in the Greenbrier River, just west of the main divide. These streams have been liberally stocked and are protected.

On the Greenbrier much comfortable fishing is done from boats with expert oarsmen, who drop down stream for any given distance, fishing all the way, and then haul back by rail or wagon. Portable boats of canvas would be just the equipment on these waters. I have heard of some strings of forty and fifty bass being made. Fort Spring, or Alderson, which are only a few miles apart on the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway, are the best points to stop at. The hotels and boats are good, and the guides understand their business.—*Charles Hallock in Forest and Stream.* —*a.*

◆

SEEDS FREE.

The new free delivery system inaugurated by Peter Henderson & Co. secures to any one who orders their seeds from them the free delivery to any post-office in the United States.

Messrs. Peter Henderson & Co. issue this year an entirely new catalogue for 1896, which illustrates and describes the grandest assortment of seeds on this continent. This "new catalogue" they mail on receipt of a two-cent stamp, or to those who state in what paper they saw their advertisement it will be mailed *free.* Full particulars of this offer will be found in Messrs. Peter Henderson & Co.'s announcement in another portion of this paper. —*a.*

◆

—We are personally acquainted with Drs. Jackson and wish to assure our readers that their "Hair Grower" will do all that they claim for it, when used properly. Send stamp to them for full particulars. Address E. B. & D. W. Jackson, Indianapolis, Ind. —*a.*

◆

—If not *above* being taught by a *man*, take this *good* advice. Try *Dobbins' Electric Soap* next *Monday*. It won't cost much, and you will then know for *yourself* just how good it *is*. Be sure to get no imitation. There are lots of them. —*a.*

◆

GLORY FOR AMERICAN MANUFACTURERS.

Steinway & Sons have received a cablegram, dated January 30th, 1896, informing them that His Apostolic Majesty Francis Joseph has most graciously appointed them Piano Manufacturers to the Imperial Court of Austria and the Royal Court of Hungary. His Majesty has also purchased a Steinway concert grand for the Imperial Palace at Vienna.

◆

—Dobbins' Floating-Borax Soap costs more to make than any other floating soap made, but the consumers have to pay no more for it. It is 100 per cent. pure and made of Borax. You know what that means. Order of your grocer. —*a.*

◆

SWEET PEAS.

An elegant garden of the best named varieties of Sweet Peas. One-quarter of a pound will be sent, postpaid, on receipt of ten cents in stamps by the Hillside Nursery, Somerville, Mass. Send at once. You will be well pleased. —*a.*

◆

50 CENTS' WORTH

Of seeds for 10 cents. Read carefully the offer of Crossman Bros., Rochester, N. Y., which appears on page 22 of this issue. —*a.*

◆

—"We are to have a tournament at the athletic club in a couple of weeks, and we want to offer some prizes. What have you got that's good?" "Why, here's the 'Trump' watch made purposely for bicyclers. It's cheap, too; with holder only $3.00. Here's a finer one for the pocket. It is of sterling silver, and has etched back illustrating bicycle riders. Here's a dainty one for the lady tennis players—only $10.00—a very refined trophy. They are all made by the Waterbury Watch Co., Waterbury, Conn. Write them for Catalogues No. 31 and 32, which will tell you all about their watches. It is the only company in the world which make and sell a watch complete." —*a.*

ALL THE RAGE

THE BROWNIES' GAME OF LEAP FROG.

The Most Amusing and Most Aggravating Puzzle Ever Offered.

CAN YOU GET THE KING BROWNIE INTO THE GOAL? IT CAN BE DONE.

Each game accompanied with Full Set of Brownies and Rules for Playing, put up in a nice box, mailed to any address in United States or Canada upon receipt of **25 Cents.**

NATIONAL GAME & PUZZLE CO., N'l Ger. Am. Bk. B'l'd'g, St. Paul, Minn.

NO HAIR NO PAY. We guarantee to grow hair on the baldest head without reference to cause of baldness or length of time bald. Enclose stamp. Particulars Free. DRS. E. B. & D. W. JACKSON, Indianapolis, Ind.

$22,000 How agent earned. Free outfit to pushing men. **Bone Mills,** P. O. 1371, N. Y.

Music STRING Mfg. Co (Our finest V Gut) 3 days stretched, gold wire wrapped, for Violin G, Sole U S Mfr. JAPANESE guitar strings, 3 times Volume & Harmony, wear 1to 5 years. WePub. a short-hand Figured guita. method (28pgs11x13) Scales, Chords Waltzes etc. Any one play readily at sight. Free Sample Copy, Cuts of Strings, Cat. & Dis (Post2c) Agt' wanted. Deal direct. String Mfg. Co. 12W Main st' Battle Creek, Mich

$4 A DAY to agent. New and wonderful typewriter for 50c. Sells to everyone. Catl. free. Gem Typewriter Co., Dept. 16, Detroit, Mich.

EYE THE DREAM EYE REMEDY MAGNETIC POWDER Removes all soreness, pain, films, and restores sight. Address ELIZA EVANS, 182 No. 19th St., Columbus, Ohio.

FREE TO ALL WE PAY THE FREIGHT. We want reliable women in every town to sell our New England Icings, Teas, Soaps, Perfumes, &c. 40 per cent. cash commission. No money required until you deliver goods. **Ceylon Tea Co.,** 10 W. Court St., Cincinnati, O.

CLAIRVOYANCE—*Free.* If *sick*, send now, your name, age, sex, lock of hair, and 2 stamps to DR. D. HINKLY, Grand Rapids, Mich.

BICYCLES AT HALF PRICE. Catalogue Free. **$50.00** HIGH GRADE 1896 MODEL. Large Tubing. Barrel Hubs. J. C. MAURER, 76 & 78 State St., Chicago.

"TRIUMPH" GUITARS & MANDOLINS. Patent metal finger-board. Wonderful tone on approval. *Catalogue free.* WOLFRAM GUITAR CO., Columbus, Ohio.

LADIES—I have found a safe home remedy that will cure all ailments peculiar to the female sex. No physician required. I will send it free with full instructions to every suffering woman. **Mrs. Edwin Mercer, Toledo, Ohio.**

ASTHMA—CURED DR. TAFT'S ASTHMALENE never fails; send us your address. We will mail trial bottle **FREE.** The Dr. Taft Bros. M. Co., Rochester, N. Y.

SUFFERERS from Dyspepsia, Indigestion, Palpitation and Constipation, radically cured with **Kremer's Dyspepsia Powder.** Trial box free for 2c. stamp. **JOHN KREMER,** Druggist, 428 7th Av., N. Y.

STAMPS, Approval Sheets, 40 to 50 per cent. commission. 20-page 1896 Price List free. **E. A. Holton, 8 Summer St., Boston, Mass.**

DEAFNESS AND HEAD NOISES CURED by Peck's Invisible Tubular Ear Cushions. Whispers heard. Successful when all remedies fail. Sold only by F. Hiscox, 853 B'way, N.Y. Write for book of proofs **FREE**

STAMPS 100 all different, Venezuela, Bolivia, etc., only 10c.; 200 all different, Hayti, Hawaii, etc., only 50c. Agents wanted at 50 per cent. com. List FREE! C. A. Stegmann, 5941 Cote Brilliante av., St. Louis, Mo.

Agents Make from $50. to $500. a month at home or traveling. Work for young and old. Don't rely on others. Earn your own living. Outfit furnished free. Get to work at once. CHICAGO SCALE CO. Chicago

SHORTHAND taught by mail. Situations procured. W. G. CHAFFEE, Oswego, N. Y.

LADIES I MAKE BIG WAGES doing pleasant home work, and will gladly send full particulars to all sending 2c. stamp. MISS M. B. STEBBINS, LAWRENCE, MICH.

YOU CAN learn to play Mouth-organ, Banjo Accordeon, or Guitar in 10 minutes. Chart free; Agts. wntd. Music Novelty Co. Dep. G Detroit, Mich.

PATENTS PATTISON & NESBIT, Wash., D. C. Advice as to patentability and Inventors' Guide free.

MY WIFE Can Not See How You Do It For the Money. **$9.00** Buy the Oxford Improved SINGER Sewing Machine, with a complete set of attachments and guaranteed for 10 years. Shipped anywhere on 30 days' trial. No money required in advance. 75,000 now in use. World's Fair Medal awarded. Buy from factory, save dealers' and agents' profit. Write to-day for our Large Free Catalogue. OXFORD MDSE. CO., 342 Wabash Ave., CHICAGO.

WANTED PARTY to buy farm here in my locality for the purpose of going into live stock business. It is positively a safe investment for a man with ready capital. No triflers need apply. Address or call on **S. H. NULL, Box 332 West Grove, Pa.**

AGENTS, Start a business of your own; be a manufacturer's agent and merchandise broker; 50 cents by return mail will bring you the addresses of 250 manufacturers and jobbers in different articles and specialties, with full instructions how to proceed. **Novelty Introduction Co., 235 Washington St., Boston, Mass.**

WE MUST HAVE 100 MORE reliable agents to sell 100 first-class articles. Your choice. Agents make from $3 to $15 a day. Exclusive territory. Send two stamps. RACINE SPECIALTY CO. (Inc.), Racine, Wis.

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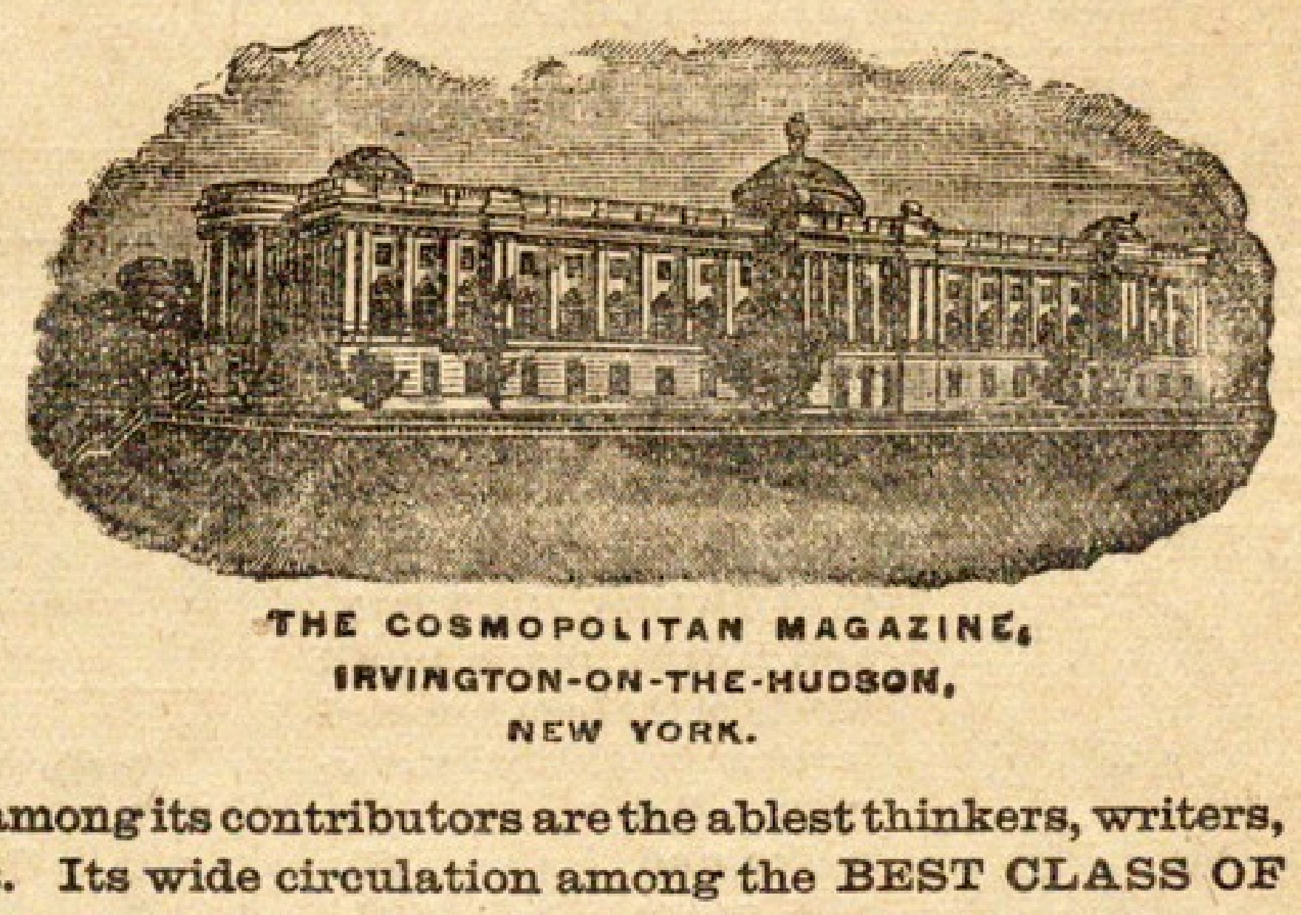
A Cosy Fireside
A Book=Table
A Charming Woman!

What is on the Book=Table?
Of course, The New York Ledger.
There should also be a magazine.

The Cosmopolitan is now the most widely read magazine in the world. If it is not on your book-table it should be. Do you doubt it? To overcome your skepticism we will send it to you----- **For three months For 25 cents only.**



THE COSMOPOLITAN MAGAZINE,
IRVINGTON-ON-THE-HUDSON,
NEW YORK.

You will follow that trial up with a dollar for the next year, that is certain; so we can afford the trouble of putting you on for three months in order to convince you, although we would much rather receive your dollar for a whole year.

As we have before said, The Cosmopolitan is to-day the most widely read magazine in the world. Why? Because among its contributors are the ablest thinkers, writers, and artists of both continents. Its wide circulation among the BEST CLASS OF READERS gives it a prestige among advertisers never before equaled by any magazine. For instance, its December issue contains from $4000.00 to $8000.00 more net cash advertising than was ever before published in any magazine, printed at any time, in any country, at any price. Its January issue contains about the same amount in excess of all previous January numbers of all other magazines. It is this recognition by advertisers that enables The Cosmopolitan to command for its readers the best in Art and Literature that money will buy. And this is why $1.00 a year will secure such a magazine.

If you do not know THE COSMOPOLITAN, we will be glad to introduce it to your attention. Send two 2-cent stamps for a sample copy.
COSMOPOLITAN MAGAZINE,
Irvington-on-the-Hudson,
New York.

COSMOPOLITAN MAGAZINE,
Irvington-on-the-Hudson, N. Y.

IVORY SOAP

IT FLOATS

At all grocery stores two sizes of Ivory Soap are sold; one that costs five cents a cake, and a larger size. The larger cake is the more convenient and economical for laundry and general household use. If your Grocer is out of it, insist on his getting it for you.

THE PROCTER & GAMBLE CO., CIN'TI.

SEEDS SEEDS SEEDS

50 CENTS WORTH OF SEEDS FOR 10c.

To anyone sending us 10 cents in stamps or currency, we will send FREE, by mail, one packet each of the *three* very popular FLOWERS illustrated in our colored plate, and also one packet each of the NEW IMPERIAL TOMATO, the finest variety yet introduced, and the NEW PINK PLUME CELERY, also illustrated in our GARDEN AND FARM ANNUAL for 1896. A copy will be sent free to every address.

CROSMAN BROS., Rochester, N. Y.

SEEDS SEEDS SEEDS

School Pins. Raised metal letters, any initials, if not more than six, with class colors. Sterling Silver 25c. $2.50 per doz. Silver plated 10c. 1.00 per doz. Catalog of Jewelry, etc., free.

SHS 96 No. 26-F.

McRae & Keeler, Attleboro, Mass.

Starch in itself cannot be taken into the blood if not first converted into a soluble substance.

H-O

does this without over-taxing the system, and it is the only oatmeal that does!

FREE TO BALD HEADS. We will mail on application, free information how to grow hair upon a bald head, stop falling hair and remove scalp diseases. Address,

Altenheim Medical Dispensary,
Room 103 Selves Building, Cincinnati, O.

ASK YOUR DEALER FOR

W. L. DOUGLAS $3. SHOE BEST IN THE WORLD.

If you pay **$4** to **$6** for shoes, examine the W. L. Douglas Shoe, and see what a good shoe you can buy for **$3.**

OVER 100 STYLES AND WIDTHS,

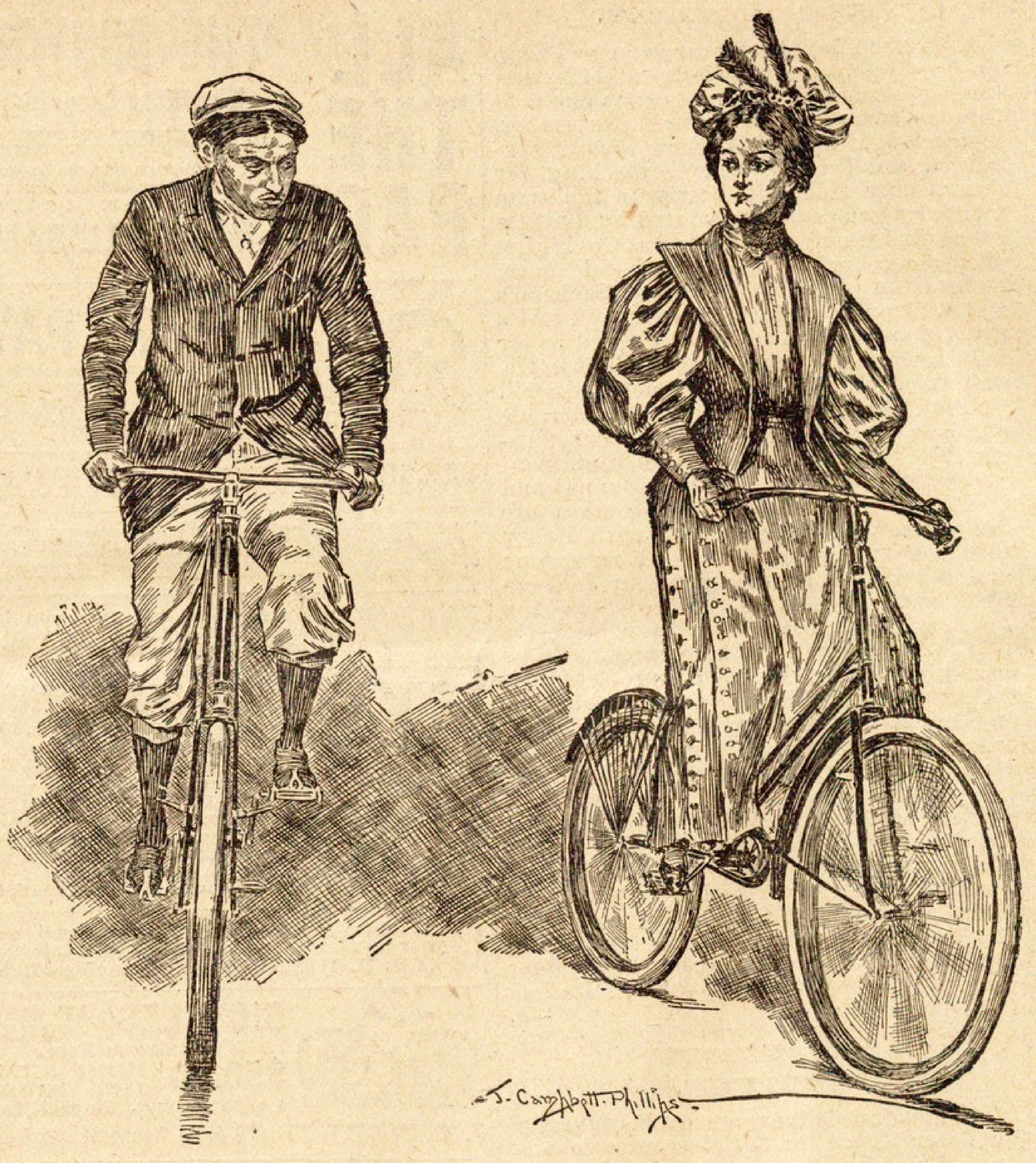
CONGRESS, BUTTON, and LACE, made in all kinds of the best selected leather by skilled workmen. We make and sell more $3 Shoes than any other manufacturer in the world.

None genuine unless name and price is stamped on the bottom.

Ask your dealer for our **$5, $4, $3.50, $2.50, $2.25** Shoes; **$2.50, $2** and **$1.75** for boys.

TAKE NO SUBSTITUTE. If your dealer cannot supply you, send to factory, enclosing price and 36 cents to pay carriage. State kind, style of toe (cap or plain), size and width. Our Custom Dept. will fill your order. Send for new Illustrated Catalogue to **Box K.**

W. L. DOUGLAS, Brockton, Mass.



HE: My bicycle is just like money.
SHE: In what way?
HE: It goes so easily.

If you want a sure relief for pains in the back, side, chest, or limbs, use an

Allcock's Porous Plaster

BEAR IN MIND—Not one of the host of counterfeits and imitations is as good as the genuine.

Waverley BICYCLES.

HALF NICKEL FRONT FORK

ARE THE CHOICE OF EXPERIENCED RIDERS,

Those who have learned to know the difference between a wheel that actually is high grade, and one that is simply claimed to be. Others may be good, but the Waverley is the **Highest of all High Grades.**

REWARD of a new Waverley Scorcher is offered to each person who recovers a stolen '96 Waverley during 1896, payable upon presentation to us of satisfactory proof of the facts and the sentence of the thief. This reward is open to every one excepting the owner of the stolen wheel, but is not payable to more than one person in any case.

ART CATALOGUE FREE BY MAIL. INDIANA BICYCLE CO., INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

WHEN HAMLET EXCLAIMED "AYE, THERE'S THE RUB!" COULD HE HAVE REFERRED TO

SAPOLIO

FREE Yourself from the disagreeable task of washing dishes the old way, by using the new

Model Dish Washer

Agents wanted. Big Profits.
C. P. Black & Co., Toledo, O.

An Elegant garden of the best named varieties of. . SWEET PEAS

We will send **one quarter pound** to any address postpaid for **TEN CENTS** in stamps.

Hillside Nursery, Somerville, Mass.

CATALOGUE FREE

$159.00

Now is the time to buy a **PIANO** or **ORGAN** from the largest manufacturers in the world, who sell their instruments direct to the public at wholesale factory prices. DON'T PAY a profit to agents and middlemen.

TERMS to suit all. No money asked in advance. Privilege of testing organ or piano in your own home 30 days. No expense to you if not satisfactory. Warranted 25 years.

REFERENCE Bank references furnished on application; the editor of this paper; any business man of this town, and to the thousands using our instruments in their homes. A book of testimonials sent with every catalogue. As an advertisement we will sell the first Piano in a place for only **$159.** Organs from **$25** upwards. Stool, Book, &c., **FREE.**

If you want to buy for cash,
If you want to buy on instalments,
BUT DON'T BUY UNTIL YOU Write Us.

BEETHOVEN PIANO & ORGAN CO.,
P. O. Box 824, WASHINGTON, N. J.

do you eat iron

Some persons are always taking iron. If weak and easily exhausted; pale and without appetite; if the nervous system is weak, and sleep difficult, what do you take? Iron? But iron cannot supply food to the tissues; nor does it have any power to change the activity of unhealthy organs and bring them back to health. Cod-liver oil is what you need. The oil feeds the poorly-nourished tissues, and makes rich blood. Iodine, bromine, and other ingredients, which form part of the oil, have special power to alter unhealthy action.

Scott's Emulsion of Cod-liver Oil, with Hypophosphites, is the most palatable way to take cod-liver oil. The hypophosphites supply healthy nerve action, which controls all the processes of life.

50c. and $1.00 at all druggists.

SEND for Catalogue of the Musical Instrument you think of buying. Violins repaired by the Cremona System. C. STORY, 26 Central St., Boston, Mass.

MANUSCRIPTS WANTED. We pay spot cash for all classes of mss., including many often declined by ordinary publishers. Particulars for stamp. **LITERARY PRESS AGENCY, So. Haven, Mich.**

YOU SAVE 50% IF YOU BUY A HIGH GRADE OXFORD WHEEL for men, women and boys at prices ranging from $15.00 to $60.00.

WE HAVE NO AGENTS. We ship from factory subject to approval and are the only manufacturers selling direct to consumers. Don't pay local dealers a profit of 50 per cent. but WRITE TO-DAY for our handsome catalogue. Address,

OXFORD MDSE. CO. 338 Wabash Av. Chicago, Ill.

$100 BICYCLE FREE. $100

In order to introduce our matchless EMPRESS, 1896, wheel, we will ship free of charges to any part of the United States one of our famous $100 bicycles to each of the three persons obtaining the greatest number of words out of letters contained in "THE EMPRESS BICYCLE COMPANY."

For conditions of competition send stamped addressed envelope to

EMPRESS BICYCLE COMPANY,
Room 605, 79 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

A FEW FACTS.

FLORIDA.

Those who contemplate a winter's trip to this amiable climate will bear in mind the

BIG FOUR ROUTE

is the "Best Line" geographically and substantially from all points East, Northeast, North, Northwest and West. Solid trains of magnificent Wagner Buffet Sleeping Cars, Buffet Parlor Cars, elegant Coaches and Dining Cars daily from New York, Boston, Buffalo, Cleveland, Columbus, Sandusky, Chicago, St. Louis, Peoria, Indianapolis and intermediate points to Cincinnati, where direct connection is made in Central Union Station without transfer across the city, with Through Trains of Pullman Sleeping Cars to Jacksonville, via the Queen & Crescent Route and Louisville & Nashville Railway.

For full particulars call on Agent "Big Four Route" or address

E. O. McCORMICK, Pass. Traffic Mgr.
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3

Everblooming Tea Roses

The Finest Kinds,
White,
Pink and Yellow

FOR 10c

Send 10c for the above three beautiful roses.

The Big Six Rose Offer for only 25c.

A Beautiful Hardy Moss Rose.
A Charming Everblooming Rose.
A Lovely Sweet Scented Tea Rose.
A Fine Perpetual blooming Hardy Rose.
A Magnificent Hardy Climbing Rose.
A Dainty Fairy or Polyantha Rose.

Think of it, the above collection of roses for only 25c.

6 Charming and Sweet Scented Tea Roses, lab'ld,	25c
6 Splendid Double Geraniums all colors, labeled,	25c
6 Beautiful Single Geraniums, fine assortment,	25c
6 Sweetest and Best Carnations, choice colors,	25c
6 of the Loveliest Fuchsias, double and single,	25c
6 Giant Prize Chrysanthemums, all fine colors,	25c
The Grand African Blue Lily,	**25c**

Send 10c for our beautiful catalogue full of original illustrations. Our Special Bargain edition is free to all.

McGREGOR BROS., Springfield, O.

THREE SHELL TRICK!

Exposed for the first time. **Anybody can do it. With secret and instructions.** Will Send set of three **Prepared Shells, Pea, etc.,** with complete plain instructions for 50 cents. All the latest moves.
C. H. CAMPBELL, Box 3226, Boston, Mass.

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Taught Free, in our manual on watch repairing, which is combined with our illustrated catalogue showing the most necessary tools and telling you how to use them; mailed free if you care to know the secrets of the business. Address
The Hofman Supply Co., 269 Ray St., Columbus, O.

MORPHINE AND OPIUM HABIT CURED

Established thirty-two years in this specialty. A booklet on "Opiumania" for the asking. Address
Dr. J. C. BECK, Box 744, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Brass Band Instruments, Drums, Uniforms and all Equipments. Send stamp for catalogue, 400 illustrations. Lyon & Healy, Chicago.

TYPEWRITER FOR SALE.

Will sell cheap a No. 2943 Yost Machine. Call and look at it or address
E. N. BUNCE, 21 Times Building, New York City.

Beeman's— THE ORIGINAL Pepsin Gum

CAUTION.—See that the name **Beeman** is on each wrapper.

The Perfection of Chewing Gum

And a Delicious Remedy for Indigestion and Sea Sickness.
Send 5c. for sample package.
Beeman Chemical Co.
113 Lake St., Cleveland, O.
Originators of
Pepsin Chewing Gum.

TOWEL RACK.

Nickel-plated and polished Brackets and Rod, 18 inches wide. Sent, prepaid, for 30 cents.

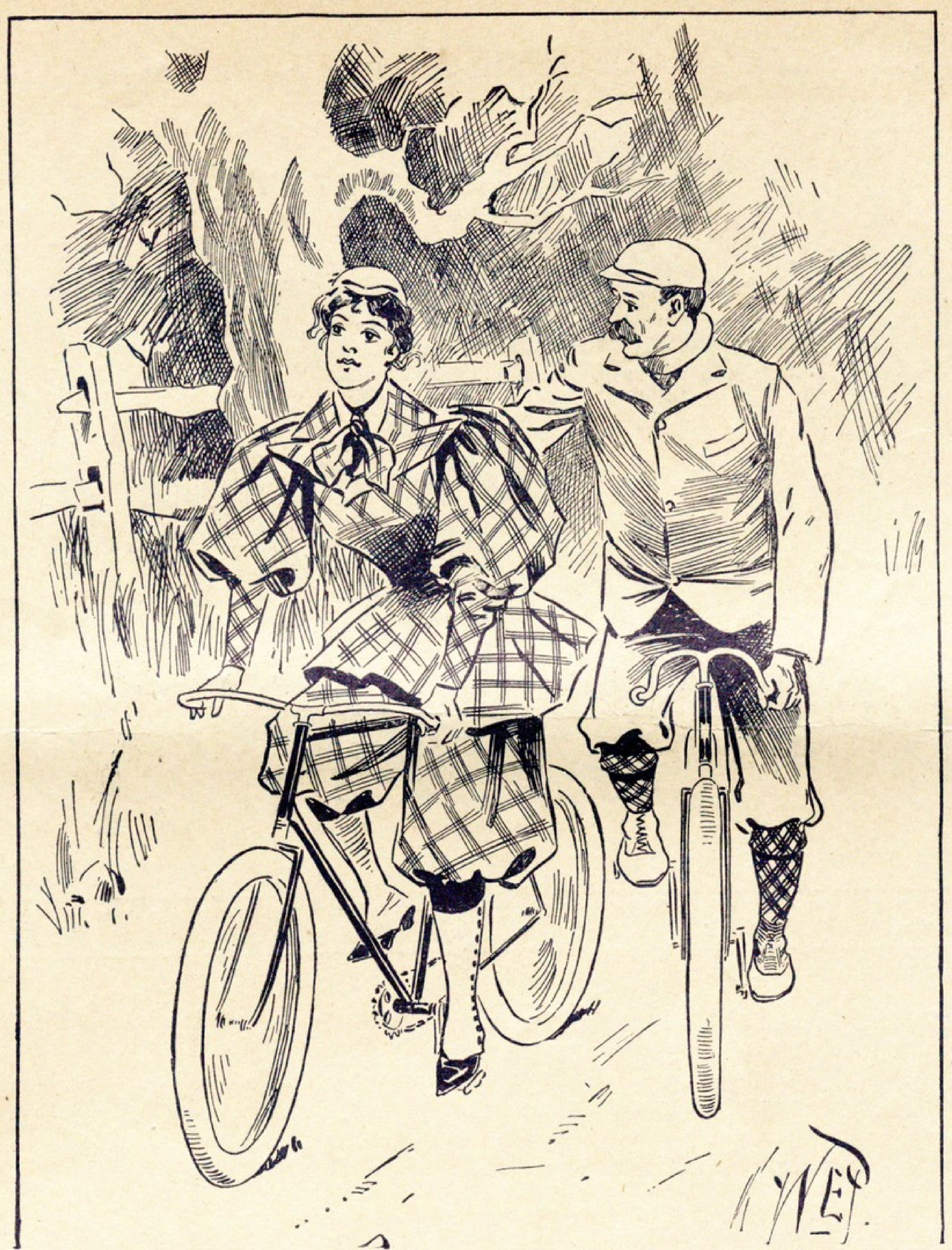
NAPKIN RINGS.

Handsome and heavily plated, $1.50 per dozen. Sample 15 cents.

DONOHUE & MORAND, 21 Arlington Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.

A First Class, Respectable, Comfortable Home in New York.

Thousands of people would like to spend a week in New York, but the grand hotels are too expensive and the cheap ones are too cheap. Mr. Tilly Haynes of Boston has secured a lease of the Great BROADWAY CENTRAL HOTEL, in the heart of the city, on the most favorable terms; he has expended over Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand dollars in an entire reconstruction of the property, and will run it as a first-class, Great Popular Family House on the American and European Plans, similar to what has proven so phenomenal a success at the United States Hotel, Boston. The location is excellent; the new Cable cars on Broadway reach every fashionable Store, Theatre and Attraction in the City, and transfer with all the cross-town lines, reaching every Station, Dock and Ferry in Town. Guests arriving at Grand Central Depot, Forty-second Street, can take Fourth Avenue Street Cars direct to Bond Street, one block in front of the Hotel. Send for circulars and maps.



SHE: There's something very attractive about these country lanes.
HE: Yes, it does seem so.

THE SHAWKNIT STOCKINGS,

Containing No Bunches and No Perceptible Seams, constructed in accordance with the Shape of the Human Foot, and knitted from the Best of Yarns, are

The Nicest-Fitting, Longest-Wearing, and Most Comfortable.

Coarse, Fine, and Extra-Fine (half-hose), in solid colors and mixtures, for Men and Youths; Super-Stout (hose) in black for Boys and Girls.

Look for *Shawknit* TRADE MARK on the toe.

SOLD BY THE TRADE GENERALLY, AND OBTAINABLE DIRECT FROM THE MAKERS.

☞ Descriptive Price-List to any applicant.

SHAW STOCKING CO., Lowell, Mass.

BE SURE AND SEE——

The Lovell Adjustable Handle Bar, and judge for yourself.

Every Bicycle Rider Will Want It!

The Only Perfect Adjustable Handle Bar yet produced.

LOVELL DIAMOND CYCLES, 14 New Models for '96.

Send for Illustrated Catalogue with full particulars.

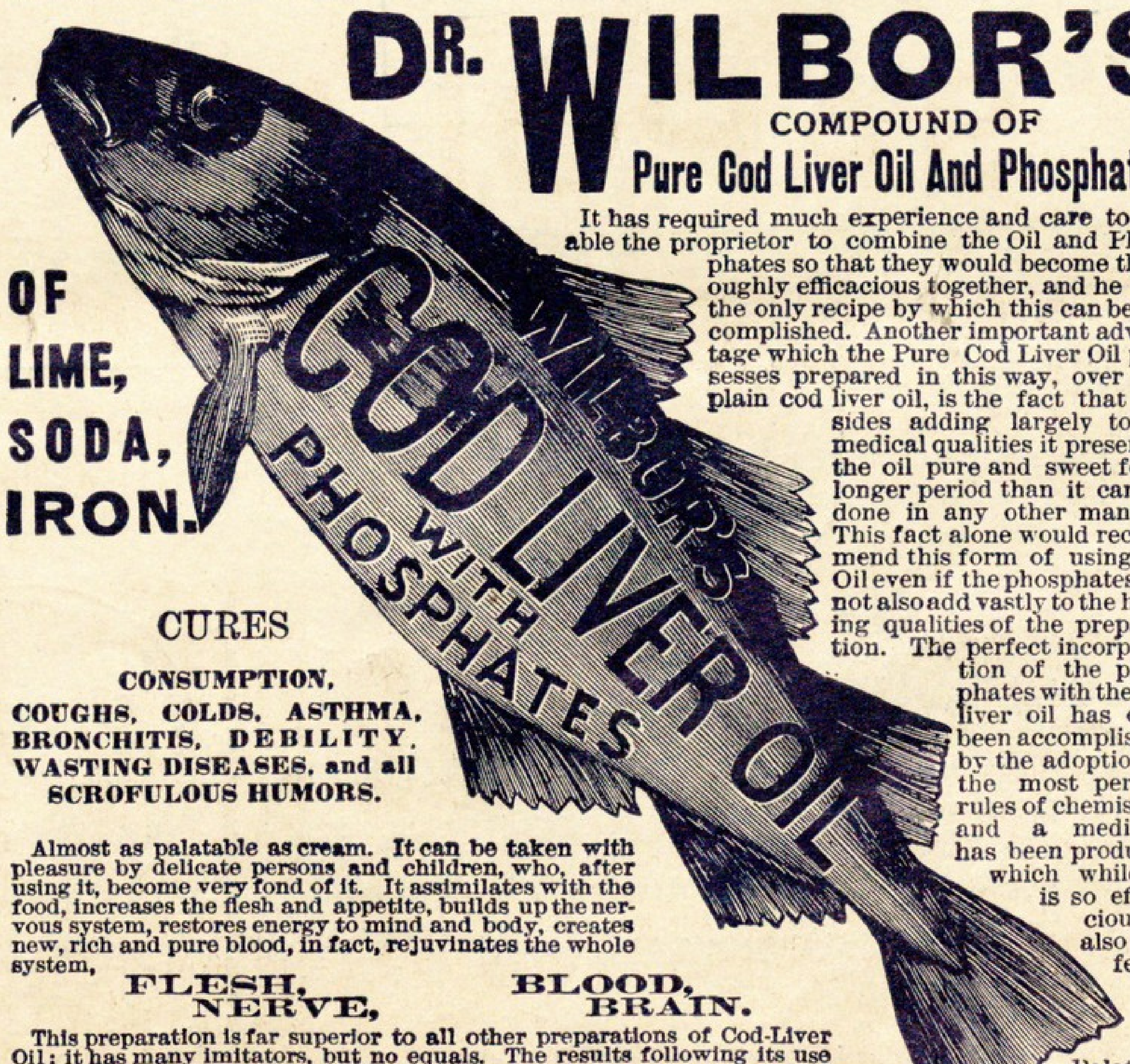
JOHN P. LOVELL ARMS CO., BOSTON, MASS.

DR. WILBOR'S

COMPOUND OF

Pure Cod Liver Oil And Phosphates

OF LIME, SODA, IRON.



It has required much experience and care to enable the proprietor to combine the Oil and Phosphates so that they would become thoroughly efficacious together, and he has the only recipe by which this can be accomplished. Another important advantage which the Pure Cod Liver Oil possesses prepared in this way, over the plain cod liver oil, is the fact that besides adding largely to its medical qualities it preserves the oil pure and sweet for a longer period than it can be done in any other manner. This fact alone would recommend this form of using the Oil even if the phosphates did not also add vastly to the healing qualities of the preparation. The perfect incorporation of the phosphates with the cod liver oil has only been accomplished by the adoption of the most perfect rules of chemistry; and a medicine has been produced which while it is so efficacious is also perfectly

Palatable and pleasant.

CURES

CONSUMPTION, COUGHS, COLDS, ASTHMA, BRONCHITIS, DEBILITY, WASTING DISEASES, and all SCROFULOUS HUMORS.

Almost as palatable as cream. It can be taken with pleasure by delicate persons and children, who, after using it, become very fond of it. It assimilates with the food, increases the flesh and appetite, builds up the nervous system, restores energy to mind and body, creates new, rich and pure blood, in fact, rejuvinates the whole system,

FLESH, NERVE, BLOOD, BRAIN.

This preparation is far superior to all other preparations of Cod-Liver Oil; it has many imitators, but no equals. The results following its use are its best recommendations. Be sure, as you value your health, and get the genuine. Manufactured only by **DR. ALEXR. B. WILBOR, Chemist, Boston, Mass.** Send for illustrated circular, which will be mailed free. ☞ Sold by all druggists. ☜

"MADE BY THE HARTFORD RUBBER WORKS CO."
HARTFORD
SINGLE TUBE
TIRES
IS A GOOD GUARANTEE.

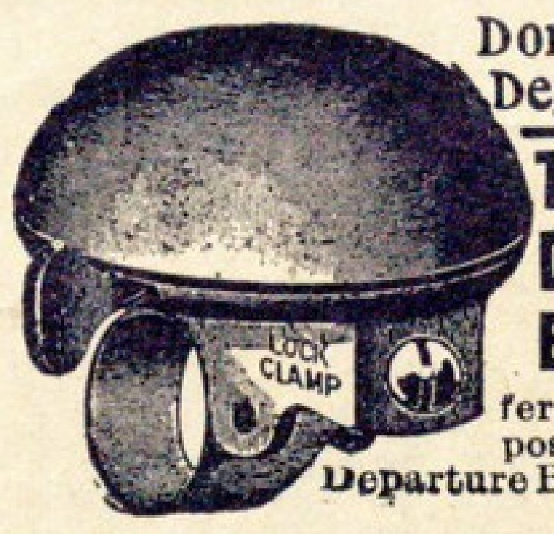
TWO years ago 80 per cent. of bicycle tires were double tube ☙ But we were making Single-Tubes ☙ Experts soon found out how good they were ☙ To-day 80 per cent. of bicycle tires are Single-Tubes ☙ ☙ Best of all—easiest of all to repair—are Hartford Single-Tube Tires.

The Standard Tires

You can have them on any bicycle if you ask.

The Hartford Rubber Works Co.
HARTFORD, CONN.

Branches—100 Chambers Street, New York.
335 Wabash Avenue, Chicago.
18-24 Main Street, San Francisco.



**Don't you hear dem bells
Dey's ringin' ev'rywhere**

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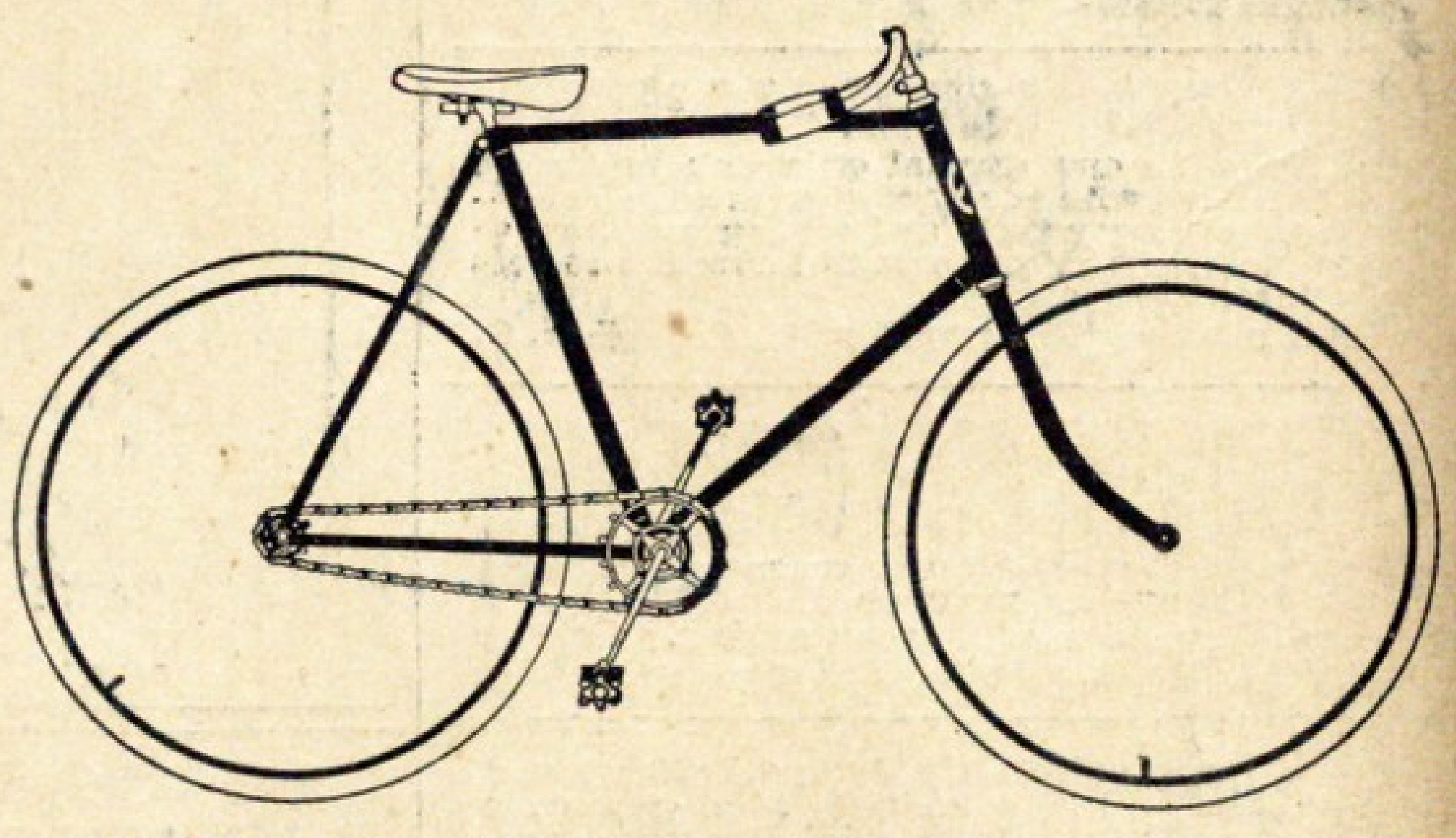

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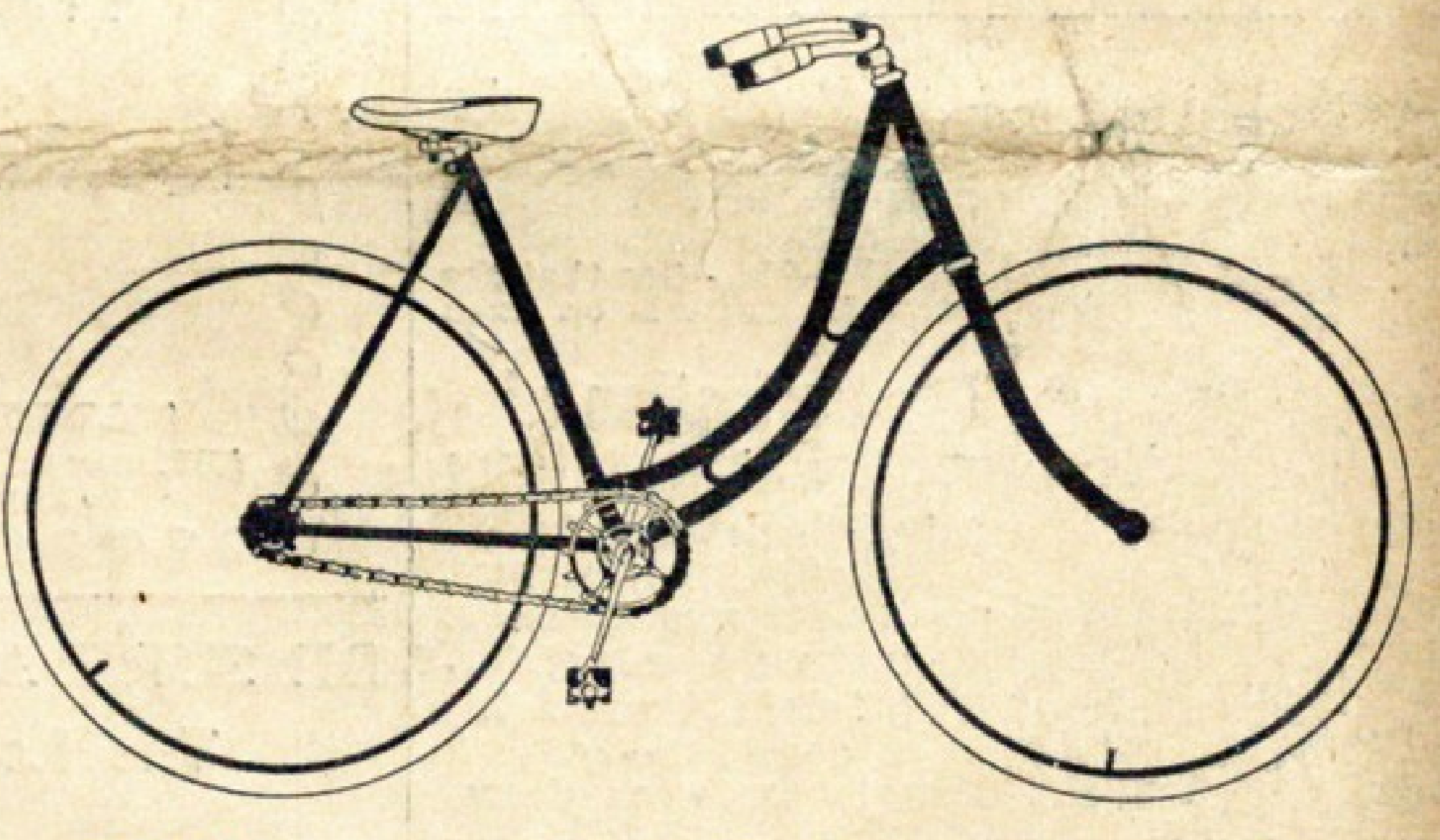

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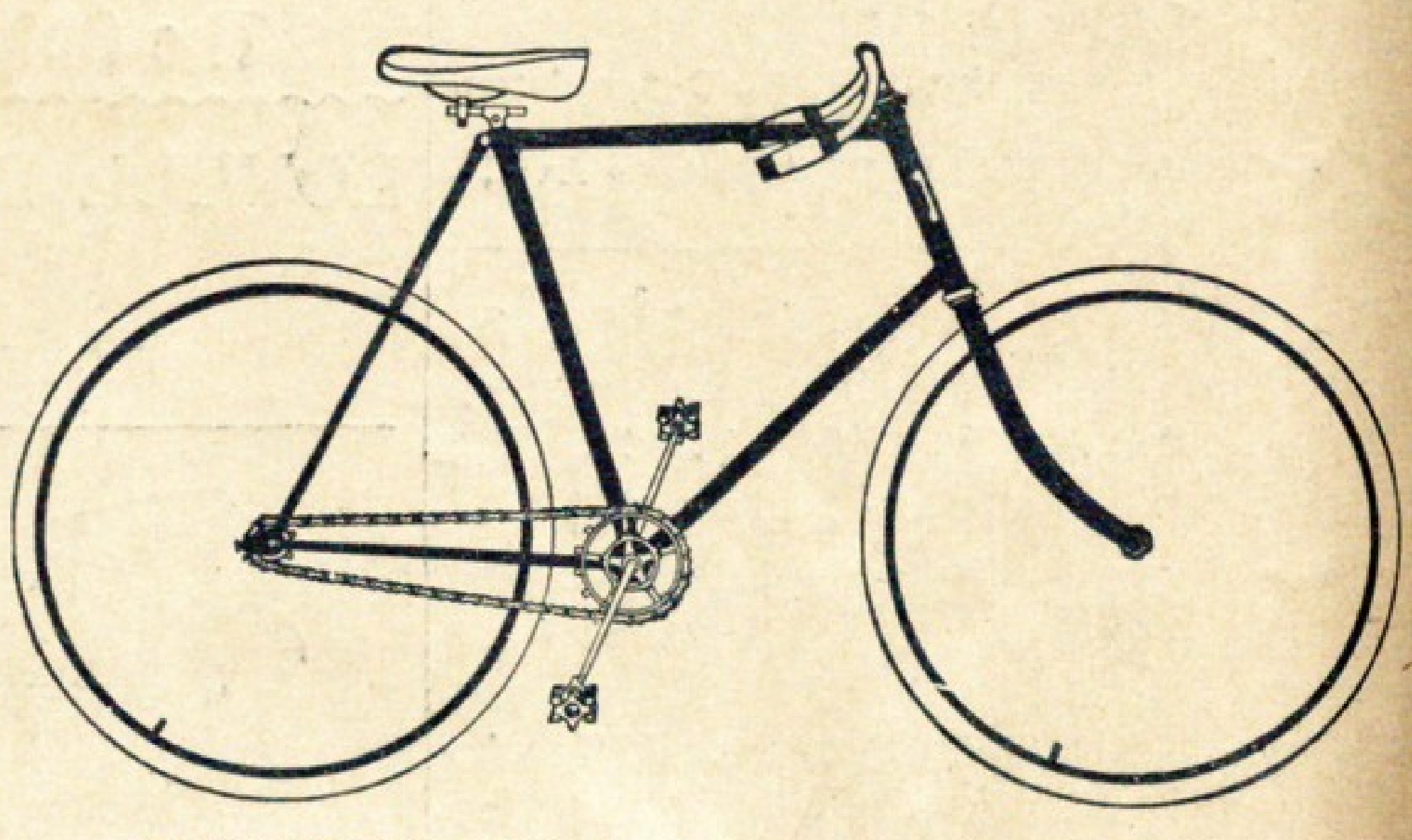

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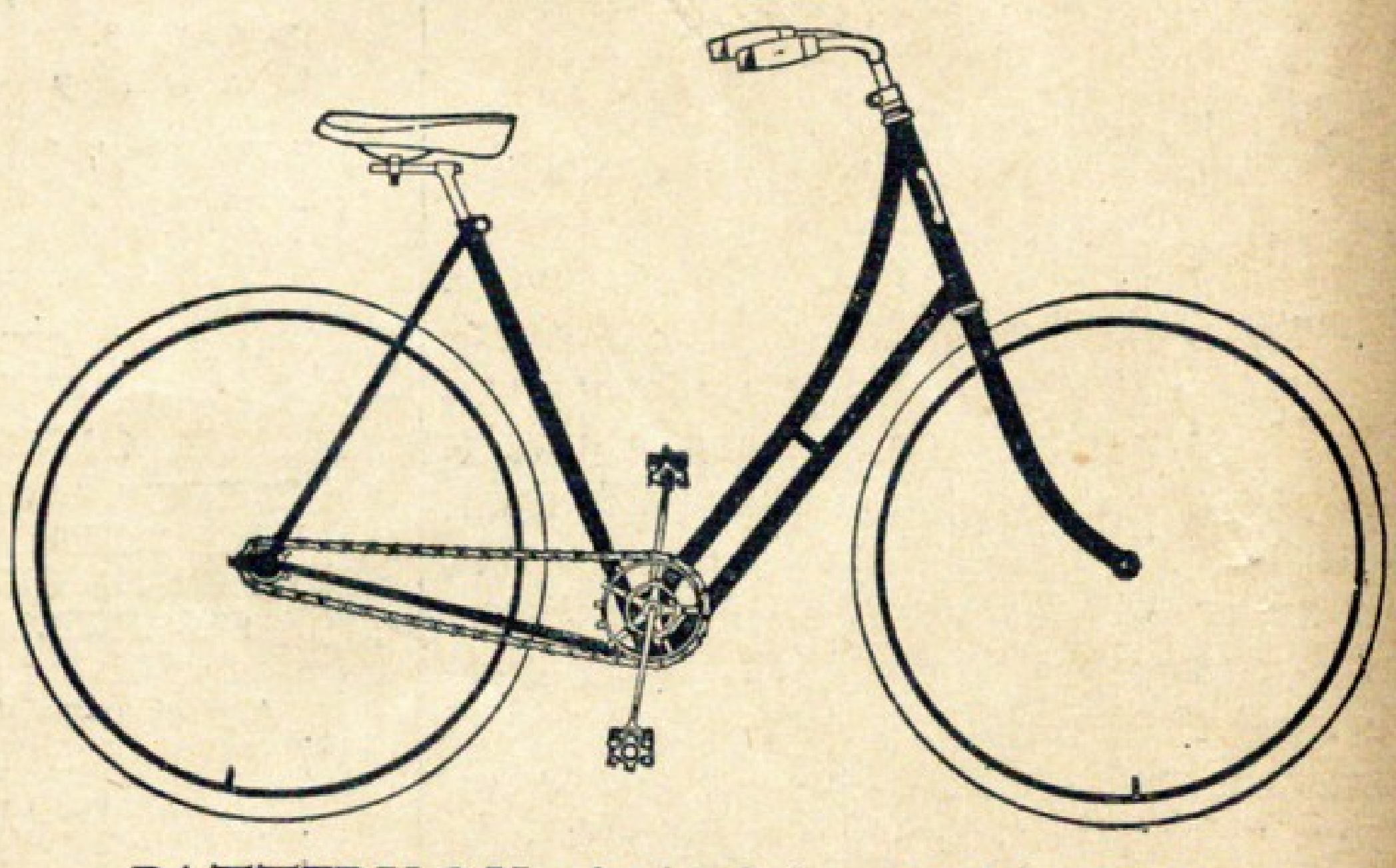

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